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Legende der verwendeten Zeichen

*	Konsultationsverfahren
***	Zustimmungsverfahren
***I	Ordentliches Gesetzgebungsverfahren, erste Lesung
***II	Ordentliches Gesetzgebungsverfahren, zweite Lesung
***III	Ordentliches Gesetzgebungsverfahren, dritte Lesung

(Das angegebene Verfahren entspricht der von der Kommission vorgeschlagenen Rechtsgrundlage.)

Abkürzungen der Ausschüsse

AFET	Ausschuss für auswärtige Angelegenheiten
DEVE	Entwicklungsausschuss
INTA	Ausschuss für internationalen Handel
BUDG	Haushaltsausschuss
CONT	Haushaltskontrollausschuss
ECON	Ausschuss für Wirtschaft und Währung
EMPL	Ausschuss für Beschäftigung und soziale Angelegenheiten
ENVI	Ausschuss für Umweltfragen, öffentliche Gesundheit und Lebensmittelsicherheit
ITRE	Ausschuss für Industrie, Forschung und Energie
IMCO	Ausschuss für Binnenmarkt und Verbraucherschutz
TRAN	Ausschuss für Verkehr und Fremdenverkehr
REGI	Ausschuss für regionale Entwicklung
AGRI	Ausschuss für Landwirtschaft und ländliche Entwicklung
PECH	Fischereiausschuss
CULT	Ausschuss für Kultur und Bildung
JURI	Rechtsausschuss
LIBE	Ausschuss für bürgerliche Freiheiten, Justiz und Inneres
AFCO	Ausschuss für konstitutionelle Fragen
FEMM	Ausschuss für die Rechte der Frau und die Gleichstellung der Geschlechter
PETI	Petitionsausschuss
DROI	Unterausschuss Menschenrechte
SEDE	Unterausschuss Sicherheit und Verteidigung
FISC	Unterausschuss für Steuerfragen

Abkürzungen der Fraktionen

PPE	Fraktion der Europäischen Volkspartei (Christdemokraten)
S&D	Fraktion der Progressiven Allianz der Sozialdemokraten im Europäischen Parlament
Renew	Fraktion Renew Europe
Verts/ALE	Fraktion der Grünen/Freie Europäische Allianz
ID	Fraktion Identität und Demokratie
ECR	Fraktion der Europäischen Konservativen und Reformer
The Left	Fraktion Die Linke im Europäischen Parlament – GUE/NGL
NI	Fraktionslos

Montag, 12. Dezember 2022

IV

(Informationen)

INFORMATIONEN DER ORGANE, EINRICHTUNGEN UND SONSTIGEN STELLEN DER EUROPÄISCHEN UNION

EUROPÄISCHES PARLAMENT

SITZUNGSPERIODE 2022-2023

Sitzungen vom 12. bis 15. Dezember 2022

STRASSBURG

AUSFÜHRLICHE SITZUNGSBERICHTE VOM 12. DEZEMBER 2022

(2023/C 292/01)

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Montag, 12. Dezember 2022

AUSFÜHRLICHE SITZUNGSBERICHTE VOM 12. DEZEMBER 2022

PRESIDENZA: ROBERTA METSOLA

President

1. Wiederaufnahme der Sitzungsperiode

President. – I declare resumed the session of the European Parliament adjourned on Thursday 24 November 2022.

2. Eröffnung der Sitzung

(The sitting opened at 17:08)

3. Erklärung der Präsidentschaft

President. – Dear colleagues, good afternoon. I think it would be no exaggeration to say that these have been among the longest days of my career. I must choose my words carefully, in a manner that does not jeopardise ongoing investigations or in any way undermine the presumption of innocence. And I will. So if my fury, my anger, my sorrow do not come across, please be assured that they are very much present – along with my determination for this House to grow stronger.

Make no mistake: the European Parliament, dear colleagues, is under attack. European democracy is under attack. And our way of open, free democratic societies are under attack. The enemies of democracy for whom the very existence of this Parliament is a threat, will stop at nothing. These malign actors linked to autocratic third countries have allegedly weaponised NGOs, unions, individuals, assistants and Members of the European Parliament in an effort to subdue our processes. Their malicious plans failed.

Our services, of whom I am incredibly proud, have been working with relevant national law enforcement and judicial authorities to break up this alleged criminal network for some time. We have acted in sync with authorities to ensure that all legal steps are respected, that all information is preserved, and that, where needed, IT equipment is secured, offices are sealed and house searches are able to be carried out. I accompanied a Belgian judge and police as required by the Belgian Constitution to a house search last weekend.

As a precautionary measure, again with full respect for the presumption of innocence, I have stripped the Vice-President mentioned of any tasks and responsibilities related to their role as Vice-President and I have convened an extraordinary meeting of the Conference of Presidents to launch a Rule 21 procedure to bring their term as Vice-President to an end in an effort to protect the integrity of this House.

I was also scheduled today to announce the opening of the negotiating mandate for the visa-waiver report with Qatar and Kuwait. In light of the investigations, this report must be sent back to committee.

Montag, 12. Dezember 2022

I also know that we are not at the end of the road and we will continue to assist in investigations, together with other EU institutions, for as long as it takes. Corruption cannot pay and we have played our part in ensuring these plans could not materialise.

And I must be clear: the allegations are not about left or right or north or south. This is about right and wrong. And I would appeal to you to resist the temptation to exploit this moment for political gain. Do not cheapen the threat that we are facing.

I am in politics – like so many of you here – to fight corruption, to stand up for the principles of Europe. This is a test of our values and of our systems, and colleagues, let me assure you that we will meet this test head on.

There will be no impunity. None. Those responsible will find this Parliament on the side of the law, and I am proud of our role and assistance in this investigation.

There will be no sweeping under the carpet. We will launch an internal investigation to look at all the facts related to the Parliament and to look at how our systems can become yet more watertight.

There will be no business as usual. We will launch a reform process to see who has access to our premises; how these organisations, NGOs and people are funded; what links with third countries they have. We will ask for more transparency on meetings with foreign actors and those linked to them. We will shake up this Parliament and these towns and I need your help to do it.

We will protect those who help us expose criminality, and I will work to look at our whistleblower systems to see how they can be made stronger. But I must also say that while we can always look to increase deterrents and transparency, there will always be some for whom a bag of cash is always worth the risk. And what is essential is that these people understand that they will get caught, that our services work and that they will face the full extent of the law, as happened in this case.

These are challenging times for us all, but I know, and I am convinced, that if we work together we can come out of it stronger.

To you, my colleagues who have lived these days with me, let me say again how deeply disappointed I am – I know you all share the same sentiment. And to those malign actors in third countries who think they can buy their way forward, who think Europe is for sale, who think they can take over our NGOs, let me say that you will find this Parliament firmly in your way. We are Europeans. We would rather be cold than bought.

Colleagues, with the agreement of the political groups, before we officially start this plenary meeting I will give the floor to the Group leaders.

Manfred Weber, *Chair of the PPE Group*. – Madam President, dear colleagues, we as the EPP Group are shocked. The corruption charges against one of our highest representatives of this European Parliament has significantly damaged our institution and affected the trust of people in the European Union as a whole. The damage to European democracy is too big to be now used for party political battles. Let us be clear about this.

We are, as the EPP Group, extremely worried because we feel the credibility of the only directly elected institution in Europe is put in danger by the actions of the people concerned. It will take more than this debate to restore some of the trust that has been lost. As they say, trust comes on foot but leaves on a horse. On the one side, no rule can stop criminals, but on the other side, we as the EPP Group are ready to improve our rules to make them better for the future.

Every one of us is sitting here with the feeling of responsibility. And to fight corruption is one of it. Corruption is the biggest enemy of democracy. It undermines the freedom of speech. It breaks the trust people have in their institutions of state. To be crystal clear: there is not any room for corruption in the Parliament or in other institutions of the European Union. The laws must be applied strictly and the prosecution has to be followed consequently.

And we express as EPP our gratitude to the Belgian police and the public prosecutor for their investigation and their actions. There is not any question that this House will cooperate fully with the rest of these investigations. I want to thank you, Madam President, Roberta Metsola, for your clear and important cooperation at the beginning of this difficult development. Fight against corruption is key. That is the only way to regain the trust of the European people in the institution, in the European Parliament, in the heart of democracy in Europe.

Iratxe García Pérez, *presidenta del Grupo S&D*. – Señora presidenta, quería comenzar diciendo que estoy segura de que voy a expresar lo que la gran mayoría de esta Cámara tiene hoy en la cabeza. Y es que este es un día negro para la democracia europea. Un día muy triste. Y también, como comprenderán, un día muy difícil para el Grupo Socialdemócrata.

Por eso quiero anunciarles que acabamos de tomar la decisión de personarnos como parte perjudicada en el proceso judicial que se va a abrir en estos momentos. Porque el comportamiento criminal de unas personas mancha a esta institución y mancha la credibilidad de la Unión Europea. Hay una investigación judicial en marcha y los culpables deberán pagar ante la justicia. Pero, además, esta Cámara debe responder con contundencia para aclarar qué ha pasado y, sobre todo, garantizar que no vuelva a ocurrir.

Por eso hago un llamamiento a la responsabilidad y a la unidad. Ya he hablado con la presidenta y con los líderes de los demás grupos políticos para trabajar unidos por una mayor transparencia y rendición de cuentas. La ciudadanía europea debe saber que cuentan con nosotros para esclarecer los hechos, para colaborar con la justicia y para actuar con responsabilidad. Porque el trabajo diario que la inmensa mayoría de los diputados y diputadas de esta Cámara está haciendo no puede quedar ensombrecido.

Discutiremos estos días medidas concretas en distintos organismos de esta Cámara y también, si es necesario, de otras instituciones europeas. Debemos actuar con firmeza contra la corrupción. Defendamos la honestidad de la política y hagámoslo trabajando unidos. Porque nuestra unidad es la mejor arma contra la corrupción y contra quienes quieren dañar a la democracia europea.

Stéphane Séjourné, *président du groupe Renew*. – Madame la Présidente, chers collègues, permettez-moi tout d'abord d'exprimer, au nom de mon groupe, tout mon soutien et tous mes remerciements à la police et à la justice belges, qui sont également le bras armé de notre démocratie. Quand je vois les tweets écrits tout à l'heure par M. Orbán, qui instrumentalise déjà cette histoire, j'ai une pensée pour le peuple hongrois, qui, lui, est privé d'une justice indépendante capable de mener de telles opérations anticorruption. Chers amis, je suis fier de travailler dans un pays où de telles enquêtes sont possibles. Il faut d'abord peut-être, je vous le disais, que notre institution réaffirme sans réserve – et vous le faites, Madame la Présidente –, son soutien total envers l'institution judiciaire et sa coopération avec elle. Cela ne veut pas dire non plus que nous devons juste attendre les conclusions de cette procédure, bien au contraire.

Mon groupe proposera des actions qui devront faire l'objet d'un consensus large entre les groupes pro-européens. D'abord, sur les personnes concernées: nous voterons, comme l'ensemble des groupes, le retrait du mandat de vice-présidente de M[me] Kaïli, et je pense qu'il est important de le faire dans un bref délai pour envoyer un signal fort. Si par ailleurs, les faits sont avérés, nous demanderons également qu'elle démissionne de son mandat.

Concernant le Qatar, Madame la Présidente, nous demandons la suspension – et vous l'avez annoncé – du nouvel ordre du jour sur les questions ayant été votées lors des commissions ou ayant fait l'objet d'un vote particulier. Au vu de l'enquête en cours, mon groupe politique soutient évidemment le retour en commission de ces débats-là.

Quant à la question de la transparence de la vie politique dans notre assemblée, nous soutiendrons le renforcement des registres de transparence. C'est un débat qui est long, dans cet hémicycle, mais nous devons également avoir systématiquement des règles de procédure sur cette question-là. Vous le savez, depuis 2019, mon groupe politique demande la création d'un organe éthique interinstitutionnel, qui doit avoir des pouvoirs d'enquête pour mieux contrôler les règles, non seulement des députés, mais aussi des anciens parlementaires comme de l'ensemble des gens qui travaillent dans les institutions européennes.

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Enfin, concernant l'ingérence – vous l'avez évoqué aussi, Madame la Présidente –, mon groupe est favorable à une commission d'enquête, mais seulement une fois que l'enquête judiciaire aura fait toute la lumière sur cette histoire.

Je conclurai en disant que mon groupe sera avec l'institution: vous trouverez toujours Renew Europe à vos côtés dans le combat démocratique de la transparence, contre la corruption. Nous ne laisserons pas salir notre travail, nous ne laisserons pas salir ce Parlement, nous ne laisserons pas salir l'Europe. Personne ne peut trahir impunément la confiance du peuple, et certainement pas de nos peuples d'Europe. Chers collègues, montrons à nos concitoyens que le Parlement européen n'a pas la main qui tremble.

Terry Reintke, *Co-Chair of the Verts/ALE Group*. – Madam President, I can only echo what the colleagues have been saying. These are dark days for European democracy. I can tell you personally, colleagues, that I have always been a very proud member of this Parliament. To me, it's the honour of my life to be elected to this Parliament. In the last days, honestly, this pride has seriously been shaken.

I myself know that most of us here are working hard, that we are honest and sincere in representing the EU citizens, but now I'm actually thinking about the millions of EU citizens who are struggling right now – the people who are lying awake at night who do not know how to pay their bills, who do not know how to get through the next month and what they had to see over the past days. This puts shame on all of us here in this Parliament.

We have to be absolutely clear: this Parliament, after what has happened, cannot do business as usual. We cannot stop at just thoughts and prayers. We have to be absolutely clear. We have to act. I want us to act, as the colleagues have said, unitedly, as pro-European Democrats.

But we have to act, and we also have to put something in writing to be clear about what we want, because we want a full inquiry into this matter. Everything has to come to the surface right now because, as people have said, trust has been broken. We have to have a dedicated position in the EP Bureau that is working on these reforms, that is working on anti-corruption, and we need to have more far-reaching measures, like, for example, the reform of the lobby register, as well as an ethics body that can make sure that we do everything in our power to prevent something like this in the future.

Indeed, colleagues, the trust of citizens has been broken, and to my understanding, rightfully so. So let us do everything we can to bring everything to light and to prevent something like this from happening again in the future. This is about more than just us. This is about protecting this House. This is about protecting democracy. This is about protecting the European project. So let us do all we can – we owe it to ourselves and we owe it to our citizens.

Marco Zanni, *Presidente del gruppo ID*. – Signora Presidente, onorevoli colleghi, ringrazio la Presidente per le sue parole in questo momento difficile. Quanto sta accadendo in questi giorni credo sia talmente lontano dalla cultura che dovrebbe appartenere a questa istituzione, che diventa molto difficile anche trovare le parole per commentarlo.

Siamo tutti profondamente sconvolti da quanto sta emergendo in queste ore, con accuse gravissime nei confronti di esponenti di peso di queste istituzioni, del presente e del passato, nonché di collaboratori indagati a vario titolo.

Per il nostro gruppo è chiaro ed essenziale che questo Parlamento debba prendere una posizione forte e decisa perché, purtroppo, l'atteggiamento che abbiamo visto in passato e soprattutto nei mesi scorsi è stato un atteggiamento che non ha aiutato queste istituzioni, con colleghi che si sono eretti a paladini contro le ingerenze straniere, tanto addirittura da riempire una relazione ufficiale di questo Parlamento con accuse non sempre circostanziate.

Siamo nella classica situazione dove si guarda alla pagliuzza degli altri e non ci si accorge della trave nei propri occhi. Per questo dico oggi a tutti i colleghi che questo Parlamento deve essere più umile e meno ipocrita su certi argomenti delicati. È chiaro che tutti possono sbagliare e commettere un errore e la responsabilità delle azioni, fino a prova contraria, è sempre personale, ma quello che è diventato francamente insostenibile in questa legislatura, e dovrà cambiare, credo sia l'atteggiamento di superiorità morale di alcuni. Questo scandalo enorme che stiamo vivendo non è che l'ennesima prova.

Ora, al di là delle azioni immediate che intraprenderemo per tutelare la rispettabilità di queste istituzioni, credo si debba fare un lavoro più profondo e credo che questo Parlamento debba indagare a fondo, in futuro, se esiste anche una responsabilità politica dietro i fatti che abbiamo visto e ricostruire, partendo da un atteggiamento diverso e soprattutto contrastando quella autoreferenzialità che troppo spesso abbiamo visto danneggiare questa istituzione e le istituzioni europee.

Ryszard Antoni Legutko, *Chair of the ECR Group*. – Madam President, well, there is not much to be said. A lot of facts have already come out, and I'm sure more will come out in the future. Perhaps some of them quite surprising in a most unpleasant sort of way. But you are right, of course, Madam President, that a European institution – the European Parliament – was targeted by the bad guys. They probably consider the Parliament to be a place with several weak spots. Indeed, they succeeded to a degree that shocked a lot of us.

I always wonder, to what extent is it a problem of the personal weaknesses of our colleagues, former colleagues or staffers, and to what extent is it a problem of a system, of a structure, and of rules and procedures? Probably both elements should be taken into account, and I wish there could be some kind of critical objective analysis of this phenomenon. After all, this is a huge institution, which is very complex and not easy to manage.

Such a critical analysis should be conducted with somebody from outside, not from our midst, for obvious reasons, that we are more interested in sustaining this institution and defending it no matter what we say openly. I would suggest that we should have a sort of critical description of the way such an institution functions. Perhaps that would give us an insight into what was wrong and how to prevent similar developments from happening in the future.

One last point: one thing that will certainly not improve the reputation of European Parliament is pompous, highfalutin rhetoric. This will not help. I have an impression that we very much like to indulge in lofty language that didn't help in the future, hasn't helped and won't help. Just do something real. We want the real thing, not rhetoric. Rhetoric is a very easy thing.

Manon Aubry, *coprésidente du groupe The Left*. – Madame la Présidente, chers collègues, je pense qu'on peut le dire très clairement: notre Parlement européen est sans doute pris dans le plus grave scandale de corruption de son histoire. Le Qatar a acheté des voix de cette assemblée pour couvrir l'exploitation à mort de travailleurs migrants sur les chantiers de la Coupe du monde.

On l'a dit, les faits sont choquants: plus d'un million d'euros déjà saisis au domicile des suspects, et la vice-présidente du Parlement sous les barreaux. C'est évidemment l'intégrité de nos institutions qui est atteinte, mais j'ai envie, ici, depuis le Parlement européen, de faire passer un message très clair au Qatar: on n'achète pas des députés comme on achète des clubs de foot.

C'est choquant, évidemment, mais je dois vous dire, chers collègues, que je ne suis pas vraiment surprise, tant l'ingérence du Qatar était palpable. Il faut le dire: depuis plus d'un an, notre groupe demandait à ce qu'un débat et une résolution se tiennent sur les violations des droits de l'homme lors de la Coupe du monde au Qatar, mais certains groupes s'y sont systématiquement opposés. Quand nous sommes finalement parvenus à l'obtenir, j'ai pu voir, pour avoir participé aux négociations au nom de notre groupe, comment certains groupes ont profité des huis clos des négociations pour euphémiser les critiques à l'égard du Qatar, l'ériger en nouveau champion des droits des travailleurs – permettez-nous d'en douter – et défendre à tout prix les intérêts du Qatar, jusqu'à venir insérer des choses qui n'avaient absolument rien à voir avec la résolution dont il était question.

Bien sûr, l'enquête touche actuellement un groupe politique, le groupe socialiste, mais l'argent n'a pas d'odeur, et la corruption, elle, n'a pas de parti. On le sait d'autant plus en France, avec l'ancien président de droite Nicolas Sarkozy, qui est visé par une enquête pour corruption par le Qatar. Je voudrais aussi parler ici des éloges ostentatoires et répétés du commissaire Margaritis Schinas envers le Qatar, qui peuvent interroger. Chaque institution doit balayer devant sa porte.

Ceci est la face émergée de l'iceberg. Bien entendu que la vice-présidente du Parlement européen doit démissionner. Mais dans quel monde vit-on, pour nous demander sa démission? Dans quel monde vit-elle, pour ne pas elle-même démissionner de son propre chef?

Deuxième chose: je pense, chers collègues, qu'il faudra très clairement une commission d'enquête de notre Parlement pour analyser la perméabilité des institutions européennes à la corruption et aux conflits d'intérêts. Enfin, pour prévenir ce type d'enjeu et ce type de problème à l'avenir, clairement, il faudra remettre sur la table des choses qui ont été enterrées par la Commission européenne, comme une autorité éthique indépendante, pour faire une bonne fois pour toutes le ménage dans nos institutions européennes.

Chers collègues, pour conclure, notre condamnation et notre réaction doivent être unanimes. Crions-le haut et fort ici depuis le Parlement européen: notre démocratie n'est pas à vendre.

President. – That concludes this round. We shall now go back to our agenda.

4. Genehmigung des Protokolls der vorangegangenen Sitzung

President. – The minutes and the texts adopted of the sitting of 24 November are available. If there are no comments the minutes are approved.

5. Verhandlungen vor der ersten Lesung des Parlaments (Artikel 71 GO)

President. – The LIBE Committee has adopted two mandates to enter into interinstitutional negotiations pursuant to Rule 71(1) of the Rules of Procedure, on third countries whose nationals are subject to or exempt from a visa requirement – Kuwait and Qatar, and on the European Union Drugs Agency.

For the first file on third countries whose nationals are subject to or exempt from a visa requirement – Kuwait and Qatar, I have decided with the agreement of the political groups to propose a referral back to committee of this file pursuant to Rule 198.

I understand that the rapporteur would like to take the floor.

Erik Marquardt, *Berichterstatter.* – Frau Präsidentin! Ich habe in den letzten Tagen nicht nur mit denjenigen, die an diesem Fall gearbeitet haben, sondern auch mit vielen Kollegen aus verschiedenen Fraktionen geredet, und das war eine seltene Gemeinsamkeit. Wir alle – alle, mit denen ich gesprochen habe – waren schockiert von dem, was hier an Vorwürfen im Raum steht. Und alle waren sich einig, dass Korruption ein Angriff auf die Demokratie ist, dass Korruption auch harte Konsequenzen haben muss – harte Konsequenzen für die, die bestochen haben, harte Konsequenzen für die, die bestochen wurden, aber natürlich auch für die EU-Institutionen, die jetzt alles in ihrer Macht Stehende tun müssen, dass sich solche Vorgänge nicht wiederholen.

In solch einer Situation können wir natürlich nicht zulassen, dass ein Staat, der potenziell unsere Demokratie angreift, eine Visaliberalisierung bekommt. Deswegen müssen wir erstens sicherstellen, dass dieser Prozess nicht beeinflusst wurde, wir müssen auch sicherstellen, dass wir die richtigen Konsequenzen ziehen. Wir müssen sicherstellen, dass wir jetzt nicht in Verhandlungen über eine Visaliberalisierung treten. Deswegen beantragen wir bei diesem Bericht nach Artikel 198 der Geschäftsordnung, den Bericht in den Ausschuss zurückzuüberweisen.

President. – I shall put the proposal to a vote.

(Parliament agreed to the proposal)

The motion is carried and the file is referred back.

Regarding the other LIBE mandate on the European Union Drugs Agency, pursuant to Rule 71(2) Members or political groups reaching at least the medium threshold may request in writing by tomorrow, Tuesday 13 December at midnight that the decision to enter into negotiations be put to the vote. If no request for a vote is made, the committee may start the negotiations. The reports which constitute the mandates for the negotiations are available on the plenary webpage and their titles will be published in the minutes of the sitting.

6. Zusammensetzung der Fraktionen

President. – The S&D Group has communicated to me that Eva Kaili is no longer a member of the Group as of 9 December 2022 and that she sits with the non-attached Members.

Pascal Durand is no longer a member of the Renew Europe Group and has joined the S&D Group as of 30 November 2022.

7. Zusammensetzung des Parlaments

President. – The competent authorities of Italy have notified me of the election of Beatrice Covassi to the European Parliament replacing Simona Bonafè with effect from 6 December 2022.

I wish to welcome our new colleague and recall that she takes her seat in Parliament and its bodies in full enjoyment of her rights pending the verification of her credentials.

8. Zusammensetzung des Beratenden Ausschusses zum Verhalten von Mitgliedern

President. – In accordance with Article 7 of the Code of Conduct for Members of the European Parliament with respect to financial interests and conflicts of interest, I decided to appoint Gilles Boyer as a member of the Advisory Committee on the Conduct of Members, replacing Pascal Durand, with effect from 7 December 2022.

9. Zusammensetzung der Ausschüsse und Delegationen

President. – The S&D, Renew Europe, Verts/ALE, ID and ECR groups and the non-attached Members have notified me of decisions relating to changes to appointments within committees and delegations. Those decisions will be set out in the minutes of today's sitting and take effect on the date of this announcement.

10. Standpunkte des Rates in erster Lesung (Artikel 63 GO)

President. – I have received from the Council its position at first reading, as well as the reasons which led to its adoption and the positions and opinions of the Commission. The full title will be listed in the minutes of this sitting.

The three-month period available to Parliament to adopt its positions will therefore begin as from tomorrow, 13 December 2022.

11. Unterzeichnung von nach dem ordentlichen Gesetzgebungsverfahren angenommenen Rechtsakten (Artikel 79 GO)

President. – I would like to inform you that, since the adjournment of Parliament's session on 24 November, I have signed, together with the President of the Council, one act adopted under the ordinary legislative procedure in accordance with Rule 79 of Parliament's Rules of Procedure.

I would also like to inform you that on Wednesday I shall sign, together with the President of the Council, 11 acts adopted under the ordinary legislative procedure. The titles of the acts will be published in the minutes of this sitting.

12. Arbeitsplan

Montag, 12. Dezember 2022

President. – I would like to inform you that I have received a request for urgent procedure from the Council pursuant to Rule 163, on the Macro-financial assistance+ instrument providing support to the Ukraine for 2023. The vote on this request will be taken tomorrow. If adopted, the vote will be held on Thursday. Since this is a second reading procedure, should no proposal to reject the Council's position and no amendments be tabled, the proposed act will be announced as adopted, pursuant to Rule 69.

I have received a number of changes to the agenda requested by political groups.

We have five groups that have asked for a debate on our introductory debate on the suspicions of corruption. What I would propose is that I ask the first group that submitted a request, which was The Left Group, to submit its request, so Ms Aubry will present it. We will then see whether there is a majority for that request. After that, we will proceed to see whether there is a majority for a resolution.

Manon Aubry, *au nom du groupe The Left*. – Madame la Présidente, je ne vais pas être longue, on a eu l'occasion d'aborder ici le cœur du sujet qui nous préoccupe. Je pense qu'il serait étrange, dans cette dernière session plénière de l'année, juste après que ce scandale a éclaté, que nous ne tenions pas un débat dans lequel chacune et chacun des parlementaires ici, choqué et certainement en colère, puisse s'exprimer. L'objectif est d'avoir l'occasion d'un débat entre nous, apaisé peut-être, mais en tout cas qui permette d'en tirer des conclusions certaines sur la suite à donner pour nos institutions européennes, parce que, en effet, les choses ne pourront plus continuer de la même manière. Je précise que nous proposons, d'une part, un débat et, d'autre part, un vote séparé pour avoir aussi une résolution.

Chers collègues, je crois que nous ne pouvons pas nous cacher derrière notre petit doigt et que, collectivement, nous devons en tirer des conclusions politiques – je parlais d'une autorité éthique indépendante, par exemple, pour rappeler à la Commission son engagement, qu'elle a mis sous le tapis – et trouver ensemble la marche à suivre après ce scandale pour que tous les groupes de lobbys, les autorités extérieures et les pays extérieurs ne viennent plus au Parlement européen acheter nos votes, comme si c'était un supermarché.

Assita Kanko (ECR). – Madam President, of course, I don't want to speak against, but the ECR Group has an idea – oh, are you surprised… don't be – so, the ECR Group would like to propose another title, namely 'The corruption allegation against Members, staff and former Members of the European Parliament'. We support the initiative, but we think it's quite clear that there has been corruption and we don't want to speak about suspicions. The title must be clear. We, the European Parliament, are not for sale. We are lawmakers. And also we request the vote to happen as a roll call vote because we need to be transparent in this House.

President. – We will vote first on the proposal from The Left Group, and if that has a majority then the other motions fall.

(Parliament agreed to the proposal)

We will therefore have a debate on Tuesday afternoon. We will now see the majorities for whether we should have a resolution.

Stéphane Séjourné, *au nom du groupe Renew*. – Madame la Présidente, pour être très clairs sur notre position – qui, je pense, est partagée par les groupes susceptibles de voter contre cette résolution pour le moment –, nous ne sommes pas hostiles à une résolution. Nous sommes plutôt, au contraire, favorables à ce que l'on tire les enseignements de cette affaire, mais avec le temps. Nous proposons de revoir cette question au mois de janvier, en espérant que la procédure judiciaire sera arrivée à son terme et qu'elle nous permettra d'avoir quelques conclusions à en tirer.

Nous sommes en pleine affaire judiciaire, avec des juges qui sont encore dans les locaux du Parlement européen à Bruxelles en ce moment. Je ne suis pas sûr qu'adopter une résolution tout de suite soit le meilleur moyen que le Parlement ait à sa disposition. Favorable à une résolution, donc, mais plus tard, mon groupe votera contre.

Manfred Weber (PPE). – Frau Präsidentin! Liebe Kolleginnen und Kollegen, die Präsidentin hat uns eingeladen, morgen in die Konferenz der Präsidenten zu kommen, um bereits erste Maßnahmen zu ergreifen und darauf zu reagieren.

Ich glaube, was jetzt wichtig ist, sind schnelle, klare Entscheidungen, Reaktionen des Parlaments. Und da wollen wir versuchen, bei dieser Vorgehensweise einen breiten proeuropäischen, demokratischen Konsens zu erzielen. Das heißt, morgen wird die Konferenz der Präsidenten bereits klare Entscheidungen fällen. Wir werden Diskussionen haben auf Vorschlag der Fraktion The Left, dass wir diese Woche genug Möglichkeit zur Aussprache haben. Deshalb möchte ich, wenn man die zwei Sachen im Hinterkopf behält, den Vorschlag von Stephane Séjourné unterstreichen und unterstützen, dass wir die Entschließung dann eben in Ruhe, wenn wir die Fakten der Ermittlungsbehörden vorliegen haben, im Januar durchführen. Diese Woche muss schnell entschieden werden, und das sollte die Konferenz der Präsidenten machen.

President. – I put to the vote the request to have a resolution this week.

(Parliament agreed to the request)

Assita Kanko (ECR). – Madam President, I would like to request to vote again on the proposal about Qatar, because it was very confusing. We could vote, for example, first on the title and then on the decision. Otherwise, it will give the impression that some Members who wanted another title are against the idea of having a debate on a resolution. Could we vote again in a more clear way, please, Madam President.

President. – Ms Kanko, I cannot do that, but you can explain your vote and the procedure and you can participate in the debate and on the resolution, now that the decision to have a resolution has been taken.

On Tuesday, the S&D, PPE and Renew Groups have requested that Council and Commission statements on 'the recent JHA Council decision on Schengen accession' be added as the second item in the afternoon after Question Time to the Commission. As a consequence, the sitting would be extended until 23:00.

Dan Nica (S&D). – Doamnă președintă, ca urmare a Consiliului Justiție și Afaceri Interne de săptămâna trecută, în care România și Bulgaria au avut parte de un tratament care a fost și nedrept, și absolut incorect, și care a încălcat decizia pe care acest Parlament a luat-o referitor la accesul în spațiul Schengen al României și Bulgariei, vă cer ca marți, după *Question time*, să avem această dezbatere referitoare la decizia care a fost luată de Consiliul Justiție și Afaceri Interne săptămâna trecută și, în consecință, să prelungiți timpul de lucru de marți până la ora 23.00.

(Parliament agreed to the request)

President. – For Wednesday, the Renew Group has requested that Council and Commission statements on 'defending the European Union against the abuse of national vetoes' be added as the second item in the afternoon. As a consequence, the sitting would be extended until 23:00.

Guy Verhofstadt, *on behalf of the Renew Group*. – Madam President, I think that it's obvious why an additional point on Wednesday afternoon would be added on defending European Union against the abuse of national vetoes. Because everybody can see today what is happening with national vetoes, on every file. More and more of these files are blocked today. The last days, the last weeks: migration strategy, Schengen, electoral law, energy, price cap on gas, taxation policy, the minimum rate on multinationals, further sanctions and further financial aid to Ukraine, where we need to find now a solution with 26 instead of a solution inside the Union.

So it's clear that, in my opinion, vetoes are an instrument for blackmailing the Union, and it is increasing for the moment. I know that we asked for a convention to seriously discuss this. And again, due to the lack of consensus, the Council is not in a position to respond to that request. So I know that we have a discussion on Wednesday with the European Council, but it's only 2 hours. What we are going to discuss is Ukraine, and we're going to discuss energy.

So I request that we need to urgently debate before the Council on Thursday, and my proposal will be to add that item Wednesday afternoon as the second point on the agenda.

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(Parliament agreed to the request)

President. – The PPE Group has asked that a Commission statement on the 'Impact on the rule of law of recent developments in Spain' be added as the fifth item in the afternoon.

Paulo Rangel, *on behalf of the PPE Group*. – Madam President, the EPP requests an additional debate on this issue of rule of law, strengthening the institutions and judicial independence. There are worrying developments in some of your countries, namely in Spain, towards less independence of the judiciary and more governmental intervention in it, in breach of the rule of law principles.

The President of the Government has recently announced his intention of taking unilateral measures on the judiciary that clearly go against everything that the European Union's values and principles defend. The playing rules cannot be changed for political interests in order to place former members of Government in the national constitutional court and to change the criminal court. It cannot be handed over to convicted criminals to decide which crimes to suppress, such as sedition and corruption.

This is not a national debate. We see. We listen. We read. If we read, we listen and we see. We cannot pretend that worrying developments are not going on in Spain. We should not have a double pattern.

(Parliament rejected the request)

President. – On Thursday, the PPE Group has requested that the Commission statement on 'the 30th anniversary of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities' be wound up by a resolution to be voted on Thursday.

Loránt Vincze, *on behalf of the PPE Group*. – Madam President, on Sunday, 18 December, we celebrate the World Minorities Rights Day. This date also marks the 30-year anniversary since the adoption of the Declaration on the Rights of Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities. It is the only UN international human rights instrument devoted to minority rights, and it is built on the core idea that the rights of minorities are vital to advancing political and social stability, and preventing conflicts.

This September, at the anniversary high-level meeting organised in New York, UN Secretary-General António Guterres said that the world still falls far short in actions supporting minorities. Parliament should also echo his call.

We welcome the debate planned for Thursday morning on the topic. On behalf of the EPP Group, I propose that in a manner consistent with our action on previous UN declarations, we also adopt a resolution. Commitment to fundamental values and to a principled foreign policy stance will demand the strong voice of the Parliament on this matter, and I hope all the political groups would support this request.

(Parliament rejected the request)

(The order of business was thus established)

Katrin Langensiepen (Verts/ALE). – Madam President, colleagues, could you wait and sit down for a moment? It's on human rights, not corruption. Thanks for listening.

On 3 December, we celebrated International Disability Day. On 6 December, a few colleagues, me and EDF, organised an event on that and the host of that event, Ms Nicholsonová and her team applied for an accessible room for that event because it was about persons with disabilities, and persons with disabilities were invited. What we got was a room that was not accessible for our wheelchair-using guests.

Even when I applied for my voting machine, it's always a fight to get it, and two times colleagues had to vote instead of me – that's against the law, by the way.

I apply now – no, I don't call the Commission, I call for the Secretariat – that maybe next year and 2024, and maybe for the next generation, it's possible to have an accessible Parliament in Strasbourg and in Brussels.

President. – Thank you very much Ms Langensiepen, you are absolutely right, and we will do our best to make sure this doesn't happen again with different measures that we can take. I will speak to the relevant services.

(The sitting was suspended briefly.)

VORSITZ: EVELYN REGNER

Vizepräsidentin

13. Gleiche Rechte für Menschen mit Behinderungen (Aussprache)

Die Präsidentin. – Vorweg möchte ich nun wirklich jeden einzelnen Satz, jedes einzelne Wort der Präsidentin unterstreichen. Dieses Haus steht für Transparenz, es steht für Demokratie.

Als nächster Punkt der Tagesordnung folgt die Aussprache über den Bericht von Anne-Sophie Pelletier im Namen des Ausschusses für bürgerliche Freiheiten, Justiz und Inneres über das Thema „Gleiche Rechte für Menschen mit Behinderungen" (2022/2026(INI)] (A9-0284/2022).

Anne-Sophie Pelletier, *rapporteure.* – *(l'oratrice s'exprime en langue des signes)*

Die Präsidentin. – Sehr geehrte Frau Pelletier, ich muss Sie leider unterbrechen, da die Verdolmetschung leider noch nicht ankommt. Ich weiß nicht, wie es den anderen Kolleginnen und Kollegen geht, aber ich habe einstweilen keine Verdolmetschung bekommen.

Ich versuche, das zu klären, und würde Sie ersuchen, dann nochmals mit Ihrer Rede zu beginnen. Einen kleinen Moment bitte.

Ich muss Ihnen aus den Dometschkabinen mitteilen, dass mir sehr höflich, aber klar erklärt wurde, dass es keine Verdolmetschung aus der Gebärdensprache in die europäischen Sprachen, in die übersetzt wird, gibt. Und aus diesem Grund muss ich Sie ersuchen, Ihre Rede in einer der Amtssprachen zu halten. Ich habe allerdings Ihre Botschaft sehr gut verstanden, dass das ein wunderbarer Anlass ist, auch die Gebärdensprache in den Katalog der Amtssprachen aufzunehmen.

Zwischenfrage von Anne-Sophie Pelletier: Und was mache ich? Spreche ich, oder was mache ich jetzt?

Ich ersuche Sie, Ihre Rede in einer der Amtssprachen der Europäischen Union, so wie sie in unserem Katalog aufgezählt sind, zu halten. Aber Ihre Botschaft ist gut angekommen.

Anne-Sophie Pelletier, *rapporteure.* – Madame la Présidente, chers collègues, voilà ce que vivent les personnes en situation de handicap. Vous avez vécu ce qu'elles vivent tous les jours. Vous n'avez pas compris ce que j'ai dit: j'ai simplement dit qu'en Europe – et je n'ai pas pu terminer mon discours en langue des signes française, puisque ce n'est pas une langue reconnue dans l'Union européenne – de nombreuses personnes en situation de handicap étaient discriminées et que, dans cette Europe, l'accessibilité du travail et des droits fondamentaux était encore loin d'être aboutie.

Ce rapport a été fait avec beaucoup d'enthousiasme, parce que j'ai voulu remettre l'individu au centre. Comment met-on l'individu au centre? Simplement en l'écoutant et en écoutant ses besoins. Ce rapport a été fait sur la base de la convention des Nations unies pour les personnes en situation de handicap, et je me suis appuyée, Madame Dalli, sur votre stratégie. S'il est vrai qu'il est encore trop tôt pour avoir une véritable analyse d'impact, ces objectifs sont ambitieux et nous pouvons aller encore plus loin.

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Je tiens en tout cas à féliciter certains États membres dans leur engagement pour la désinstitutionnalisation des personnes en situation de handicap. Je n'aurai pas mes quatre minutes, parce que j'ai pris plus de deux minutes à parler en langue des signes. Je vais donc être brève: il faut aller plus loin et demander une véritable législation antidiscrimination dans l'Union. Une directive existe, mais elle est bloquée au Conseil depuis 2008. Quatorze ans déjà que le Parlement avait pris position, et depuis, rien. Il a toujours mieux à faire que de s'occuper des plus vulnérables.

Vous ne nous entendiez pas? Nous allons crier plus fort. Nous allons changer d'approche, et au lieu de demander le déblocage, nous demandons à la Commission une mise à jour de la directive européenne sur l'égalité de traitement. Je demande ici, comme mon collègue Younous Omarjee l'a déjà fait, que la langue des signes internationale ainsi que la langue «facile à lire et à comprendre» soient mises en place. En effet, si nous voulons parler véritablement d'inclusion des personnes en situation de handicap dans la vie publique et politique, alors ici au Parlement européen, nous devons y mettre les moyens.

Que dire de plus? Demander l'arrêt de la stérilisation forcée, l'arrêt de l'institutionnalisation et l'arrêt du financement de ces institutions par l'Union européenne. Une personne en situation de handicap doit pouvoir décider par elle-même de l'endroit où elle veut vivre et du soutien qu'elle veut recevoir.

En parlant de soutien, il faut là aussi que l'Union mette en place des aides communautaires afin que chaque personne en situation de handicap ne soit plus laissée au bord de la route et que chaque enfant en situation de handicap puisse avoir un transport pour aller à l'école. Je remercie M. Cañas d'être dans l'hémicycle aujourd'hui. Il faut que chaque personne en situation de handicap puisse bénéficier d'un travail. Ici au Parlement, ou à la Commission, ou dans nos institutions, combien de personnes en situation de handicap, visible ou invisible, sont embauchées?

Parlons des aidants familiaux, ces gens qui consacrent leur temps, leur vie et leur amour à accompagner leurs proches dans le handicap. Pensons à eux et apportons-leur aussi tout notre soutien. Il faut réfléchir à une politique triangulaire qui puisse prendre en compte à la fois les personnes en situation de handicap, le personnel socio-éducatif et les parents aidants. Permettez-moi, à ce titre, de penser à une femme en situation de handicap qui s'appelle Odile Maurin et qui n'a pas eu accès à la justice. Là aussi, les droits fondamentaux sont bafoués, piétinés, foulés au pied tous les jours.

Je n'ai pas pu dire tout ce que je voulais dire, mais je l'ai dit autrement, comme un certain nombre de personnes en situation de handicap s'expriment, et je suis fière de l'avoir dit autrement, moins fière que l'on m'ait arrêtée en cours de route. Je serai ravie d'entendre ce que mes collègues et la Commission auront à dire de ce rapport. Je voudrais remercier une femme qui s'appelle Céline Boussié et qui a dénoncé pendant dix ans la maltraitance des enfants en situation de handicap dans les instituts médico-éducatifs.

Jordi Cañas, *ponente de opinión de la Comisión de Empleo y Asuntos Sociales.* – Señora presidenta, el título de este «Informe hacia la igualdad de derechos para las personas con discapacidad» es un título honesto, porque «hacia» es una preposición que indica y marca el movimiento hacia algún sitio en relación a un objetivo. Y realmente tenemos ese objetivo, que es la igualdad, pero no estamos ahí. Estamos a veces *de iure*, pero no *de facto*. La realidad es que no hay esa igualdad. Lo hemos comprobado aquí hoy mismo. No existe realmente esa igualdad.

La igualdad, en el fondo, es un objetivo que siempre estamos persiguiendo. Para todos. Pero nuestros conciudadanos con discapacidades la necesitan especialmente. Nosotros, como diputados, tenemos una obligación. Este Parlamento debe comprometerse con una idea clara: todos los derechos, para todos los ciudadanos, en todos los países de la Unión Europea. Para que lo que es *de iure* sea *de facto* en todos los países de la Unión Europea. No puede haber excepciones de países en la búsqueda de la igualdad, porque la igualdad es algo que nos define como europeos. Y esa búsqueda espero que algún día dejemos de ir «hacia» ella, para estar realmente en una sociedad igual para todos en cualquier sitio.

Ulrike Müller, *Verfasserin der Stellungnahme des mitberatenden Petitionsausschusses*. – Frau Präsidentin, Frau Kommissarin, geschätzte Kollegen! Unser aller Ziel muss es sein, eine inklusive und aufmerksame Gesellschaft für alle Menschen zu erreichen. Menschen mit Behinderungen haben das Recht, ihr Leben so zu gestalten, wie sie es wollen. Dazu gehört: Beziehungen leben können, Akzeptanz und Inklusion. Das muss unser aller gemeinsames Ziel sein.

Barrierefreiheit ist dabei zentral. Sogar in den europäischen Institutionen haben wir sie noch nicht erreicht, wie wir jetzt gerade erleben konnten. Das ist nicht akzeptabel, und es sollte der erste Schritt von uns sein, hier dafür zu sorgen.

Im täglichen Leben sind wir alle gefordert, und es braucht mehr gesellschaftliche Aufmerksamkeit. Gerade während der COVID-Krise haben Depressionen und Panikattacken massiv zugenommen. Neben körperlichen und geistigen Beeinträchtigungen können auch psychische Einschränkungen eine Behinderung darstellen und verstärken. Das wird momentan nicht genügend wahrgenommen. Um diese Probleme anzugehen, brauchen wir eine andere Denkweise und andere Ansätze, begonnen auf der europäischen Ebene bis hinunter in die Verwaltungen der Mitgliedstaaten und der Gemeinden. Menschen mit Behinderung brauchen eine stärkere Unterstützung auf allen europäischen Ebenen.

Helena Dalli, *Member of the Commission*. –Madam President, honourable Members, the Strategy for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities focuses on areas where EU action brings the highest added value, strongly calling on Member States to act in their areas of competence. The United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities is our beacon. The Convention is clear: equal rights need to underpin every single area of life of persons with disabilities.

I welcome our common perspectives and commitment. This is the message we will send to the UN Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in the context of its ongoing review of the EU's implementation of the Convention. The questions the Parliament raises with this report are fundamental. I welcome the opinions provided by the Committee on Employment and Social Affairs, the Committee on Petitions and the Committee on Culture and Education.

Living independently while being included in the community is the cornerstone of equal participation and of full enjoyment of all human rights and fundamental freedoms. Next year, the Commission will present guidance on deinstitutionalisation and independent living, followed in 2024 by a framework of excellence for social services for persons with disabilities.

These two initiatives go hand in hand, as true inclusion in the community can only happen if quality, affordable and accessible local services are available. Accessibility is another key element, as we heard earlier today, for independent living, as it enables persons with disabilities to move freely, access information and enjoy the opportunities their communities offer, including in employment, education, culture, sport and leisure, without forgetting, of course, access to healthcare. In this spirit, with the AccessibleEU initiative, the Commission will offer support to Member States to implement accessibility legislation and to share and develop good practices.

Another important initiative mentioned in your report is the EU Disability Card. The Commission work programme for next year refers to our intention to put forward a legislative proposal. An impact assessment will help determine the scope of the card, as well as the type of legal instrument to put it into practice. We have high ambitions, but will need to be mindful of competences, as set out in our Treaties.

The Commission intends to make progress on the Equal Treatment Directive beyond employment. I am glad to note that Parliament is on the same page in this respect. Both reasonable accommodation and non-discriminatory access are necessary to achieve equal treatment of persons with disabilities. Similarly, I hope we can continue to support and facilitate the participation of persons with disabilities in the upcoming European elections in 2024, in order to advance on the accessibility of electoral information and voting mechanisms, as well as on the participation of persons with disabilities.

Additionally, persons with disabilities have a right to be elected on an equal basis with others, and this Parliament should represent the EU in all its diversity. Although bound by Member States' competences in the organisation of elections, I believe we can launch a strong message as EU institutions on this democratic matter. Political participation is, however, just part of the wider picture to ensure that broader legal rights in terms of legal capacity, decision making and access to justice are ensured for persons with disabilities.

The participation of persons with disabilities in the design and implementation of programmes for disaster risk reduction needs to be strengthened to make preparedness plans and response efforts more accessible. It is clear that much work remains to be done. Thank you for the opportunity to open this important point, and I look forward to the discussion.

Sara Skyttedal, *on behalf of the PPE Group*. – Madam President, let me first start by thanking our rapporteur, Ms Pelletier, for her good work and for the good cooperation on this file.

Let me highlight two important issues covered. Firstly, the forthcoming proposal on the EU disability card. It would mean more free movement between Member States also for EU citizens who are disabled. I think the Parliament needs to send an important signal in this report where we support the work of the European Commission in this matter.

Secondly, the EU has great influence on our immediate neighbourhood. It is crucial for the EU to use its soft power to increase the quality of life for people with disabilities, also outside our Union. I am happy that this perspective has also been covered and highlighted in this report.

Lastly, I would like to highlight the EPP Group's opposition to paragraph 90 of this report that proposes an EU legal framework for inclusive enterprises. Our European companies are already working really hard to better include persons with disabilities in enterprises and in society at large. I think that we need to show them that we see these efforts without demanding new EU directives that will further put red tape on businesses in these tough times.

Theresa Muigg, *im Namen der S&D-Fraktion*. – Frau Präsidentin, sehr geehrte Frau Kommissarin, liebe Mitglieder, liebe Kolleginnen! Inklusion ist ein Menschenrecht, denn jeder Mensch hat das Recht, ein gleichberechtigter Teil der Gesellschaft zu sein. So steht es in der Behindertenrechtskonvention der Vereinten Nationen, und diese Konvention schreibt auch die Umsetzung von Menschenrechten für Menschen mit Behinderung in sämtlichen Lebensbereichen vor.

Dazu haben wir uns bereits vor zehn Jahren verpflichtet, wir haben es heute gehört, und ich sage es noch einmal: Die Realität sieht komplett anders aus, und ja, dafür sollten wir uns auch schämen. Denn noch immer werden Menschen mit Behinderungen oft völlig selbstverständlich und auch kategorisch ausgeschlossen. Teilhabe wird nicht ermöglicht und das Menschenrecht Inklusion immer wieder verletzt. Und auch noch immer gibt es keine Richtlinie, die diese Diskriminierung von Menschen mit Behinderung verbietet. Und noch immer gibt es keine adäquate Auseinandersetzung mit den Erfahrungen der Gewalt, die diese Menschen machen.

Menschen mit Behinderungen werden von uns als Gesellschaft behindert. Um das zu ändern, brauchen wir einen Paradigmenwechsel. Wir brauchen eine andere Repräsentation. Wir brauchen andere Regeln. Wir brauchen andere Gesetze. Wir müssen Selbstbestimmung sicherstellen und Diskriminierungsschutz gewähren. Menschen mit Behinderung dürfen nicht auf Wohlwollen, auf Spenden angewiesen sein. Sie brauchen nur eines, und zwar dass die Menschenrechte eingehalten werden. Dafür haben wir zu sorgen. Und der Bericht von Kollegin Pelletier und auch die Art und Weise, wie er präsentiert wurde, hat das auf das Fundierteste aufgezeigt und verdient vollste Unterstützung. Setzen wir uns bitte alle mit voller Energie mit diesem Thema auseinander.

Abir Al-Sahlani, *för Renew-gruppen*. – Fru talman, fru kommissionär, ärade kollegor. EU:s motto är Förenade i mångfalden. Vi ska främja varandras mångfald, medlemsstater emellan och medborgare emellan, och stärka varandra. Men i flera medlemsstater förtrycks medborgare av en enda anledning: funktionsnedsättning. De sätts in på institutioner livet ut. De fråntas sina grundläggande rättigheter, såsom att rösta, och där de får rösta är vallokalerna inte säkert tillgängliga för dem. Det är helt oacceptabelt att inte låta människor få leva sina liv fullt ut på grund av en funktionsnedsättning.

Tydliga signaler har skickats från parlamentet med den här lagstiftningen till de medlemsstater där rättigheterna för personer med funktionsnedsättning inte respekteras och garanteras. Tydliga signaler har också gått till kommissionen, där vi nu också vill se ett tillgänglighetskort på plats så fort som möjligt för personer med funktionsnedsättning. Och man får nu inte släpa fötterna efter sig.

Till de medlemsstater som ännu inte kan garantera alla sina medborgares rättigheter: Vi håller ögonen på er! Jag håller ögonen på er! Det är dags för er att avskaffa dessa förtryckande lagstiftningar.

Jag vill tacka Anne-Sophie Pelletier för ett väldigt gott samarbete. Jag vill tacka alla grupper från höger till mitten till vänster för ett bra samarbete, där vi la våra ideologiska och politiska skiljaktigheter åt sidan och faktiskt fick fram en bra text, ett bra förslag. Det här ämnet är så viktigt för så många medborgare i EU, och vi ska inte sjabbla bort det på grund av politik.

Katrin Langensiepen, *on behalf of the Verts/ALE Group*. – Madam President, dear ladies and gentlemen, dear Helena, dear colleagues, thank you for that well-written report on equal rights of persons with disabilities.

A famous activist in Germany – he's a wheelchair user – said in a statement: disabled persons are the last to be mentioned and the first to be forgotten. The situation for disabled persons in the EU is still unjust and almost all Member States ignoring the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. They have ratified it in different ways, here and there.

Our role is to push EU legislation so that Member States finally implement our rights. The freedom of movement for persons with disabilities must be guaranteed. This is why we urgently need an EU disability card here. I still have a German one. I can't use it as an EU citizen in France or in Belgium when I take the bus to Parliament. But the transport must be accessible. Otherwise, the card is useless for me and for us persons with disabilities.

We also need equal opportunities for persons with disabilities in the labour market. Stop funding institutions. Therefore, here we call as well on the Commission to review the Employment Equality Directive, to align it with the CRPD and push inclusive employment.

I have many things to add. But let me say something. Christmas is knocking on our door and there are so many TV shows in our Member States, they are doing something good for us, spending money, millions and millions. Can we stop that business, please? We want to have human rights, equal rights, and no charity.

Antonio Maria Rinaldi, *a nome del gruppo ID*. – Signora Presidente, onorevoli colleghi, parlerò come semplice genitore di un ragazzo disabile al 100 % e non come membro di questo Parlamento e per un minuto sarò idealmente padre di tutti i disabili che non possono essere qui presenti.

Ho letto con attenzione la relazione «Verso pari diritti per le persone con disabilità» e mi chiedo perché tutte le istituzioni europee non abbiano mai rivolto piena attenzione alle effettive problematiche che quotidianamente affrontano le persone con disabilità, le loro famiglie e chi si prende amorevolmente cura di loro.

Sono ancora troppo ignorate le emarginazioni, le discriminazioni, specialmente sul lavoro, le insormontabili difficoltà burocratiche, le differenze nei trattamenti sanitari e nei sostegni economici all'interno dei Paesi membri, quando proprio dal pieno rispetto e attenzione verso i disabili si misura il reale livello di civiltà di una comunità organizzata e democratica.

Ora, cari colleghi, invece parlerò come membro di questo Parlamento e non posso che constatare che la relazione che stiamo discutendo associa, oltre alle persone con disabilità, anche altre categorie di cittadini che necessitano di altre tutele, che nessuno nega, ma certamente non assimilabili, paragonabili e sovrapponibili a quelle proprie dei disabili.

Perché i disabili non possono essere oggetto di una specifica e autonoma relazione ed è necessario inserire anche altre categorie, che non hanno nulla a che vedere con il mondo e le esigenze di chi è disabile? Eppure stiamo parlando di ben 87 milioni di cittadini europei, di cui ben 24 milioni con disabilità grave, per non contare i minori. Non sono forse sufficienti per non inserire altre categorie da tutelare?

Montag, 12. Dezember 2022

In ultimo, desidero ringraziare la nostra Presidente Roberta Metsola per averci regalato questa spilla del Parlamento, io sono fra quelli che la possono indossare a testa alta.

Beata Mazurek, *w imieniu grupy ECR*. – Pani Przewodnicząca! Szanowni Państwo! Dobro osób z niepełnosprawnościami od dawna leży mi szczególnie na sercu, dlatego doceniam wiele zapisów w tym sprawozdaniu. Umożliwienie samodzielnego funkcjonowania w życiu publicznym oraz przeciwdziałania wykluczeniu osób niepełnosprawnych jest kwestią, myślę dla nas wszystkich, priorytetową. Musimy zrobić wszystko, co w naszej mocy, aby miały one poczucie bycia częścią naszej wspólnoty. Na szczególną uwagę zasługuje podkreślenie potrzeby wdrożenia planu zarządzania ryzykiem związanym z klęskami żywiołowymi uwzględniającego właśnie niepełnosprawność.

Zupełnie jednak nie rozumiem umieszczania w nim spraw niezwiązanych z tematem, jak mowa nienawiści, prawa mniejszości seksualnych i odniesienia do innych grup mniejszościowych np. LGBT. Dlaczego takie kwestie są podejmowane w dokumencie zatytułowanym: „Dążenie do równouprawnienia osób z niepełnosprawnościami"? Jest to jawna praktyka manipulacyjna, z którą absolutnie nie mogę się zgodzić.

José Gusmão, *em nome do Grupo The Left*. – Senhora Presidente, Senhora Comissária, a verdade é que, em toda a Europa, os Estados-Membros que subscrevem a Convenção dos Direitos das Pessoas com Deficiência, que subscrevem a ideia de que é preciso garantir direitos iguais e uma vida independente às pessoas com deficiência, aprovam basicamente leis bem-intencionadas que não têm intenções de cumprir. Portanto, continuamos a assistir a toda a espécie de discriminações, exclusões, pseudo-terapias e a toda a espécie de violências simbólicas e físicas sobre as pessoas com deficiência.

É verdade que grande parte destas responsabilidades está dentro da área de competências dos Estados-Membros, mas também é verdade que continuamos a canalizar uma parte substancial do financiamento comunitário destinadas às políticas sobre a deficiência para instituições que são totalmente contraditórias com o espírito e a letra daquilo que consta deste relatório.

Esse financiamento tem de terminar. Todos os euros de financiamento comunitário da política sobre a deficiência têm que passar a ser canalizados para o paradigma da vida independente. Essa é uma responsabilidade nossa.

Mislav Kolakušić (NI). – Poštovana predsjedavajuća, poštovane kolege, poštovani građani Europske unije. Obitelj, društvo, država, Europska unija - imaju jedan smisao. Temeljni smisao da se brinemo jedni za druge, da oni koji mogu više pridonose više, da bi oni koji ne mogu imali dostojanstven život. Invalidi, nažalost, mogu biti u različitim skupinama. Kod nekih je invalidnost manja i mogu, uz našu pomoć, gotovo potpuno ravnopravno sudjelovati u društvenom životu.

Nažalost, neki invalidi rađaju se tjelesno i mentalno zakinuti da od samog svog rođenja ne mogu sudjelovati u životu. Mnoga djeca koja se rađaju ili dobivaju autizam u najranijim godinama, ona nisu djeca koje imaju male poteškoće. Neki od njih da. Neki su u potpunosti onemogućeni da žive i potrebna im je njega roditelja 24 sata. Najveći strah roditelja je što će biti s tom djecom kada oni umru. Moramo biti uz njih.

Stelios Kympouropoulos (PPE). – Madam President, Commissioner Dalli, colleagues, we speak about equal rights for disabled persons. Yet, this is the very first time after my election that I speak in front of you from this rostrum like everyone else in this House. My excitement is so emotionally great, even if you see such a small change.

The fact that the place of every disabled person in their society is not equal to the other citizens is obvious in so many ways. This is the reason I welcome this report, particularly the highlighting of the urge to grant the right of legal capacity to every person, the adoption of common terms for independent living, and deinstitutionalisation across the EU, whose lack causes a continuous misinterpretation of the CRPD and the misplacement of funding.

The collection of common statistical data, the importance of accessible housing, understanding that the involvement of persons with disabilities in political decision-making is not enough unless it is promoted to co-production. By insisting on these issues, the EU would support the implementation of the already existing guidelines towards equal rights, although we have to go through a long distance.

In Greek, we have the word 'philanthropy', which is equal to charity. We don't want to be 'philanthropists' in order to accept that every person is unique and in order to have an inclusive society; we want this individualism.

Die Präsidentin. – Alle Abgeordneten, ausnahmslos alle, haben das Recht, hier vor diesem Rednerpult ihre Reden zu halten. Insofern kann ich mich nur für dieses Haus entschuldigen, dass das erst jetzt erfolgt ist. Es ist eine Selbstverständlichkeit.

Maria Grapini (S&D). – Doamna președintă, doamna comisară, stimați colegi, și eu sunt emoționată acum pentru că vorbesc după colegul nostru, vorbim despre persoanele cu dizabilități. Avem studii, avem cercetare făcută, ce impact e în societate asupra acestor persoane, Convenția ONU.

Dar în practică, în fiecare țară, prima problemă a acestor persoane este accesibilitatea și am văzut că chiar în Parlamentul European colegii nu au acces la sală. Este posibil așa ceva? Colegul nostru a vorbit pentru prima dată aici, în fața Parlamentului.

Doamna comisară și stimați colegi, cred că trebuie să punem capăt totuși acestei dictaturi a Consiliului. Am auzit aici că de 14 ani se încearcă să avem o legislație pentru persoanele cu dizabilități, de 14 ani! De 11 ani, iată, în 8 s-a blocat intrarea a două state.

Azi am venit la Strasbourg, doamna comisară. Știți cum se coboară scările pentru persoanele care nu sunt în Schengen? Nu există posibilitatea ca o persoană cu dizabilități să ajungă la control pașapoarte, pentru că trebuie să coboare niște scări.

Este inadmisibil ce se întâmplă cu Consiliul și cred că noi, Parlamentul, trebuie să ne unim și să reușim ca munca noastră pe care o facem aici să fie pusă în practică.

Fără a avea măsuri concrete, pe care noi le votăm aici și Consiliul le blochează, nu vom rezolva nici problema persoanelor cu dizabilități.

Monica Semedo (Renew). – Madam President, one-and-a-half years ago, I suddenly became impaired. I have a rare disease, and today I only see 25%, even with glasses, which is sometimes disturbing.

But I know that many others have greater struggles. Many others are in a worse situation than me. They face discrimination in their everyday lives: half of the people with disabilities are unemployed; nearly 30% are at risk of poverty. They are excluded – we are excluded – from society. We have barriers, for example, in transportation or in education. 800 000 people with a disability could not vote in 2019 in the European elections because of barriers of accessibility. That cannot be. They have their right to vote. They have their voice to vote.

As one of the chairs of the European Parliament's cross-party Disability Intergroup, I can assure you that we fight for equal chances and opportunities for everybody, which also means for people with disabilities. We fight so that everybody can contribute to society, because we can and we want to.

Die Präsidentin. – Ich muss jetzt leider streng sein. Wunderbare Reden, alle voller Leidenschaft. Aber nichtsdesdotrotz ersuche ich wirklich alle, sich an die Redezeiten zu halten. Es ist natürlich immer besonders unfair, wenn ich das vor der nächsten Sprecherin oder dem nächsten Sprecher sage, wenn jetzt gerade vorher jemand überzogen hat. Nichtsdesdotrotz meine Bitte, sehr geehrte Frau Grace O'Sullivan, sich an die Redezeit zu halten.

Grace O'Sullivan (Verts/ALE). – Madam President, 'rights not charity'. This is the slogan of the Clare Leader Forum, an inspiring group in my own constituency who campaigned tirelessly to overhaul the outdated bureaucracy faced by people with disabilities.

Any Irish person living with a disability – intellectual or physical – knows the daily struggle to secure services that are considered basic in many parts of Europe. I recall the campaigner Trish McNamara saying to me that, as soon as she was in a wheelchair, it was like she turned invisible.

Still today, people are forced into nursing homes for lack of alternative suitable accommodation. At the Owenacurra Centre in Middleton, Cork, the voices of the vulnerable residents and service users have been all but ignored. I myself am battling to get my own daughter the assistance she needs against a system that just does not want to know. Ireland has signed up to the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. It is time to put it into place.

Rosanna Conte (ID). – Signora Presidente, onorevoli colleghi, di recente stiamo assistendo a una ritrovata e unanime consapevolezza sul tema della disabilità, come dimostrano le numerose proposte legislative e i dibattiti istituzionali sempre più frequenti. È evidente, tuttavia, che tutto questo non basta e bisogna dirlo con chiarezza.

Sono troppi gli ostacoli che impediscono alle persone con disabilità una partecipazione attiva nella società, a partire dalla formazione nelle scuole, dove ancora persistono limiti di inclusione, fino ad arrivare all'occupazione, dove spesso i pregiudizi hanno la meglio sulle competenze.

Se a tutto ciò aggiungiamo che in molti Stati membri ancora non esiste un riconoscimento giuridico e contributivo per i *caregiver*, che assistono le persone con disabilità, capiamo che le lacune sono ancora molte.

Insomma, c'è urgente bisogno di cambiamento pratico ma anche culturale, che permetta alle persone con disabilità di sentirsi protagonisti e non solo destinatari di politiche assistenziali e che permetta a ognuno di noi di riconoscerci in una società veramente inclusiva e accessibile per tutti.

Ádám Kósa (NI). – Elnök Asszony! Önök jól tudják, hogy mindig is kiálltam a fogyatékossággal élő emberek jogai mellett. Nem szép dolog azonban az ideológiai kérdéseket beleerőltetni a szövegbe, mert megosztóak, és elterelik a fókuszt. Az ideológiai viták helyett ideje lenne megoldást találni arra, hogy az innovatív technológiákat jobban használjuk, mert ez segíti a fogyatékossággal élők önálló életvitelét. Az oktatás és a képzés területén számolják fel az akadályokat, és olyan programokat indítsanak, amelyeknek köszönhetően a fogyatékossággal élő személyek minőségi munkahelyeken dolgozhassanak, és azonos munkáért egyenlő bért kaphassanak. A mi politikánk akkor hiteles, hogyha nevén nevezzük a dolgokat. A fogyatékossággal élőkről szóló jelentés erről szóljon, ne másról!

Rosa Estaràs Ferragut (PPE). – Señora presidenta, la Convención de las Naciones Unidas sobre los Derechos de las Personas con Discapacidad es el primer Tratado internacional de derechos humanos que fue suscrito por la Unión Europea y por todos sus Estados miembros y, por lo tanto, jurídicamente vinculante. Dieciséis años después, estamos valorando su cumplimiento. Se han hecho avances, pero queda muchísimo trabajo por hacer. Las palabras clave son «accesibilidad» e «inclusión».

«Inclusión» significa que todas las personas tienen el mismo valor. «Inclusión» significa tolerancia. «Inclusión» significa igualdad. «Inclusión» significa respeto. Las propias personas con discapacidad nos dan cada día una lección de humanidad y de vida de lo que significa esta palabra.

«Accesibilidad» es la otra palabra clave. Accesibilidad en la educación —todavía queda mucho por hacer—. Accesibilidad en el trabajo —basta ver las cifras: las personas con discapacidad tienen unas cifras de paro muy superiores a las que no tienen discapacidad—. En los temas de la sanidad, la justicia, la violencia de género contra las mujeres, la vivienda accesible, la participación, el derecho al voto y, sobre todo, los estereotipos: las personas con discapacidad nos dan una lección diaria.

Tenemos la oportunidad ahora de actuar con la misma sinceridad con la que ellas afrontan sus vidas.

Marc Angel (S&D). – Madame la Présidente, chers tous, de nombreux rapports ont été votés dans cet hémicycle concernant les droits des personnes en situation de handicap, qu'il s'agisse d'une approche harmonisée sur la définition du handicap, des quotas en entreprise en faveur d'une plus grande inclusion, ou encore d'une bonne couverture sociale pour les personnes vivant avec un handicap.

Le Parlement européen en appelle d'une même voix à des actions concrètes afin de mettre un terme à l'injustice sociale subie par les personnes en situation de handicap. Il serait inadmissible qu'aucun de nos appels ni aucune de nos promesses ne se traduise en actes concrets sous le présent mandat.

Je me tourne dès lors vers la Commission: travaillons main dans la main pour que cette proposition législative relative à la mise en place d'une carte européenne du handicap soit adoptée sous cette législature-ci. Il faut une carte multitâche, qui ne se limite pas aux avantages du transport, mais s'étende également à la culture, aux loisirs, au sport, à l'éducation et à l'emploi, et une carte inclusive, qui tienne compte du type de handicap grâce à des pictogrammes et à des codes QR différenciés, facilitant ainsi les contacts de personnes au handicap parfois non visible avec les services de secours de première ligne. Il en va de notre crédibilité vis-à-vis de nos électrices et de nos électeurs.

Merci à M[me] Pelletier pour son excellent rapport. J'ai confiance en la commissaire pour que ce dossier avance vite et en bonne intelligence avec nous.

Salvatore De Meo (PPE). – Signora Presidente, onorevoli colleghi, oggi, ancora una volta, siamo qui in Aula e tutti siamo d'accordo che la disabilità è un'innegabile condizione di svantaggio, che per milioni di persone rende più difficoltosa la vita quotidiana e il loro inserimento nella società.

Purtroppo, a distanza di anni e nonostante numerosi provvedimenti europei e nazionali non sempre coordinati tra loro, dobbiamo prendere atto che c'è ancora molto da fare e, soprattutto, dobbiamo prendere atto di dover combattere e abbattere le barriere culturali dell'indifferenza e della discriminazione.

Io credo che la disabilità sta negli occhi di chi la vuol vedere, creando barriere sociali molto più difficili da superare rispetto a quelle materiali; una barriera fisica può essere abbattuta, quella invece invisibile è quella fatta dell'incomprensione e dell'indifferenza.

Questa risoluzione va nella giusta direzione e propone politiche attive di inclusione per garantire percorsi di autonomia, guardando soprattutto al dopo di noi che, permettetemi, dovrebbe essere una fase ancora più attenzionata perché quella più difficile non solo per la persona disabile, ma per chi vive con lei e soffre con lei, forse ancor di più. Soffre il disagio e l'incertezza di avere, per una persona cara, non più certezze di condizioni di inclusione e di uguaglianza.

Sirpa Pietikäinen (PPE). – Arvoisa puhemies, arvoisat kuulijat, vammaiset ihmiset ovat ihmisiä. Siksi heille kuuluu myös ihmisoikeudet. Ihmisoikeudet kuuluvat oikeusvaltioperiaatteeseen, jonka puolustaminen on komission tehtävä. Toivonkin komission tältä osin myös tehostavan ja koettelevan toimintarajojaan suhteessa neuvostoon, joka on vitkutellut muun muassa syrjinnän kieltävän direktiivin ja saavutettavuuden eteenpäin viemisessä tarvittavassa kunnianhimoisessa tasossa.

Kiitos komissiolle lupauksesta ottaa käyttöön EU:n vammaiskortti. Tämä on ensimmäinen askel myös vammaisten henkilöiden liikkuvuuden todelliseen toteuttamiseen ja palvelujen saatavuuteen. Tarvitsemme vastaavasti myös velvoitteet, jotka koskevat liikkuvuuden yhteentoimivuutta. Pois laitostamisesta. Samat oikeudet ja mahdollisuudet myös työelämään. Siksi on tärkeää velvoittaa yrityksiä diversiteettiin palkkauksessa.

Lisäksi tarvitsemme luonnollisesti myös samat kielioikeudet, jotka koskevat vaikkapa tätä parlamenttia ja tulkkausmahdollisuuksia.

Spontane Wortmeldungen

Milan Brglez (S&D). – *(začetek govora z izklopljenim mikrofonom)* … za besedo. Ob vseh takšnih razpravah najprej omenim, da je tudi Evropska unija pogodbenica Konvencije Združenih narodov o pravicah invalidov. Zato moramo tako pravno kot politično se zavezati k najvišjim standardom. In tudi ta simbolično – to sporočilo, ki ga bomo sprejeli v tednu po mednarodnem dnevu invalidov in človekovih pravic – uporabiti pravzaprav za to.

Najprej gre za evropska sredstva, ki jih res moramo uporabiti za prehod od bivanja v institucijah na samostojno bivanje in bivanje v skupnosti, kjer je pa predpogoj tudi dostop do kakovostne oskrbe in podpore.

In drugo, gre za enakopravno mobilnost, ker sem ponosen, da je Slovenija ena od pionirk evropske kartice ugodnosti za invalide, ki mora postati stalen evropski projekt, hkrati pa naj Komisija, ko to kartico uvede, uvede tudi evropski status invalida za avtomatično vzajemno priznavanje statusa in pravic vseh invalidov v Evropi, zato, ker smo pogodbenica te konvencije.

Hvala.

Sandra Pereira (The Left). – Senhora Presidente, este relatório dá voz a muitas das reivindicações das pessoas com deficiência. É necessário assumir um verdadeiro compromisso com o cumprimento dos direitos das pessoas com deficiência, pugnando para que todas, independentemente da sua origem social, do seu nível de rendimento ou da zona de residência, tenham acesso a serviços públicos de qualidade, capazes de lhes assegurar o direito à saúde, à educação, à habitação, à segurança social, à formação profissional e ao emprego com direitos e, claro, à comunicação.

Precisamos de políticas que valorizem as pessoas com deficiência e o seu contributo para a sociedade, que lhes assegure serem cidadãos de pleno direito, na lei e na vida, com a garantia de uma vida autónoma e digna, com acesso à educação inclusiva, pública e de qualidade, a cuidados de saúde específicos, à cultura e ao desporto.

Daqui saudamos as pessoas com deficiência, as suas famílias e as suas organizações que as representam e que as defendem. Contem connosco na luta para superar múltiplas adversidades e combater desigualdades e discriminações, exigindo o cumprimento de todos os direitos.

Радан Кънев (PPE). – Г-жо Председател, за нас, всички участници в този дебат е ясно, че състоянието на интеграцията на хората с увреждания в различните европейски държави е много различно. Както участието им на пазара на труда, процентът на безработицата, доходите, които получават, дори възможността им да израстват в обществото, и ако искате дори представителството им в националните парламенти или тук при нас в Европейския парламент. Но е твърде опростено, бих казал - погрешно, да обясняваме тези разлики с различното финансово състояние на нашите държави.

Големият проблем е по какъв начин се харчат средствата, и европейски и национални, отделени за интеграция на хората с увреждания, и най-важната част от този доклад, най-важният акцент, който ние трябва да сложим, е именно пълната забрана на възможността националните правителства да харчат пари, насочени към интеграция на хора с увреждания, за тяхната фактическа по-нататъшна изолация.

Clara Aguilera (S&D). – Señora presidenta, me sumo a los apoyos de esta importante iniciativa, y, por supuesto, felicito a la señora Pelletier por el informe. Quiero también pedir, en nombre de todos, como bien han hecho mis colegas, la actualización de la Directiva sobre la igualdad de trato. Esta Directiva no está prohibiendo la discriminación que se produce sobre estas personas. Es increíble.

En la Europa del estado de bienestar, en la Europa de los derechos, que tantas veces presumimos de ellos, estas personas no tienen esos derechos. A veces no pueden ni votar, como bien se ha recogido aquí. Es absolutamente inaudito en la Unión Europea.

El derecho a decidir es muy importante. La accesibilidad debe ser un objetivo prioritario, prioritario para todos. La Unión Europea demuestra no estar a la altura de las circunstancias si no ponen esto en el orden del día de las prioridades, tanto de la Comisión como del Consejo —que ni siquiera está presente— y de este Parlamento Europeo.

Termino diciendo que estas personas, lo ha dicho la colega, no quieren ser tómbolas. Quieren derechos. Y en nuestra ambición como políticos está cambiar las cosas para mejorar la vida de las personas. Hagámoslo ya.

Pierrette Herzberger-Fofana (Verts/ALE). – Madame la Présidente, les personnes en situation de handicap sont confrontées à des obstacles structurels et à la discrimination, et sont souvent victimes de violences. En abordant la discrimination intersectionnelle, nous pourrions prendre des mesures ciblées pour les personnes handicapées en situation de vulnérabilité, telles que les femmes en situation de handicap issues des minorités, qui sont les plus touchées. Confrontées, malheureusement, à une double discrimination intersectionnelle, elles souffrent de la violence et sont souvent exclues des services de base, comme l'éducation, la santé ou encore le travail.

Il existe aussi des handicaps non visibles de l'extérieur qui demeurent une contrainte réelle pour l'individu. Cette vulnérabilité liée au genre et au handicap crée un environnement propice aux maltraitances et à divers abus. Il est de notre devoir d'intervenir pour faire cesser cette injustice. Nous devons reconnaître l'intersection qui existe entre la violence, le genre et le handicap, à laquelle les femmes et les filles sont confrontées, afin de pouvoir adopter des stratégies de réponse plus inclusives. Nous devons également abolir les restrictions à la capacité juridique, qui entravent les droits des personnes en situation de handicap, pour leur garantir un accès abordable, sûr et efficace à la justice.

Je vous invite donc à nous soutenir pour la prochaine journée européenne de protestation en faveur de l'égalité des personnes en situation de handicap, afin de leur donner une voix, et de conférer à l'inclusion son véritable caractère prioritaire.

Juan Fernando López Aguilar (S&D). – Señora presidenta, comisaria Dalli, cuando hablamos de igualdad de derechos con personas con discapacidad, estamos hablando de derechos fundamentales y de la Carta que los protege, del artículo 21, que prohíbe cualquier forma de discriminación contra ellas y del artículo 26, que ordena a la Unión Europea su promoción y su integración plena.

Es lo que apunta este informe de la Comisión de Libertades Civiles, Justicia y Asuntos de Interior, que tiene como ponente a la señora Pelletier. Una Tarjeta Europea que elimine las diferencias nacionales y señale los problemas de discriminación a los que se enfrentan las personas con discapacidad. La promoción de su participación política, su acceso a la atención sanitaria, la prohibición de cualquier forma de violencia o de práctica forzada contra ellas.

Y, finalmente, esto pone de manifiesto que, promoviendo los derechos de las personas con discapacidad, no solamente estamos apuntando a sus derechos como personas individuales, estamos apuntando a la mejora y a la transformación a mejor del conjunto de la sociedad europea y de la de los Estados miembros.

Pero este debate no estará completo si no señalamos que queda pendiente la Directiva sobre la igualdad de trato, bloqueada por el Consejo desde hace la friolera de más de diez años. Es absolutamente inconcebible. Y creo, por tanto, que es un objetivo al que la Comisión debe aspirar: que la Directiva sobre la igualdad de trato complete el trabajo que está haciendo este Parlamento Europeo para eliminar la discriminación contra las personas con discapacidad.

Mick Wallace (The Left). – Madam President, the right to timely access to affordable, preventative and curative healthcare of good quality is enshrined in the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. The EU and all its Member States have ratified this Convention. Yet, in Ireland last week, the Health Service Executive were forced to apologise to the families of children across the country who cannot access disability services.

Earlier this year, Inclusion Ireland conducted a survey among families with children with disabilities. Over 50 % of the families of children surveyed were not in receipt of any disability service. Over 85 % of them have waited for over a year. How in God's name can the Irish Government stand over this? And is there any way that the EU can actually pressure the Irish Government to do the right thing in the area of disabilities?

(Ende der spontanen Wortmeldungen)

Helena Dalli, *Member of the Commission*. – Madam President, it's non-negotiable. The Strategy for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities is anchored in all the rights of the UN Convention. Recognising persons with disabilities as rights owners is the entry point to a change of perspective in disability policies. Persons with disabilities are citizens entitled to, like everybody else, to take their decisions, have ambition, develop their talents and flourish in their private, educational and professional lives.

We listened carefully to you while setting the priorities in the strategy, as you know, and we expect continued cooperation with you, the House of European Democracy, as the strategy becomes a practical reality. All three institutions must take seriously the implementation of the Strategy for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and discuss ways to address and to better our practices in that regard.

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I value all opportunities, including today's debate, to develop our work. Together, we can progress towards building a Union of equality.

Anne-Sophie Pelletier, *rapporteure*. – Madame la Présidente, je voudrais d'abord montrer à M[me] Dalli à quel point ce Parlement lui demande d'activer les choses et lui demande clairement qu'il y ait une directive sur la carte européenne d'invalidité, et ce avant la fin du présent mandat, pour que l'égalité remporte au moins cette victoire-là au cours de cette législature.

C'est le temps des remerciements, et je voudrais remercier tous mes collègues rapporteurs fictifs, ainsi que les collègues des commissions PETI, EMPL et CULT, qui nous ont apporté beaucoup de bonnes opinions et remarques, qui ont été importantes pour nous. C'est depuis que je suis arrivée ici, en 2019, que je me suis dit: j'aurai un rapport sur les personnes en situation de handicap, parce que dans un temps pas si ancien, je m'occupais de personnes en situation de handicap. Je pense que nous sommes tous différents, que nous sommes tous uniques, et que finalement c'est de la différence que naît la mixité, et que c'est de la mixité que naît la société. Il est donc important qu'ici au Parlement, nous portions une voix forte pour qu'il y ait une véritable égalité des droits fondamentaux pour les personnes en situation de handicap.

Je vous renouvelle, Madame Dalli, nos demandes et nos ambitions, pour que plus jamais, dans aucun État membre, il n'y ait une inégalité entre des citoyens. Le validisme existe, et aujourd'hui, nous nous rendons compte que ce validisme fait que nous pensons pour les personnes en situation de handicap, que nous agissons pour les personnes en situation de handicap, et que trop peu souvent nous leur laissons la voix, la voix des oubliés. Alors, j'espère en tout cas qu'avec ce rapport, ici dans ce Parlement, j'aurai réussi à redonner de la voix aux personnes en situation de handicap, de la voix à ces oubliés.

Die Präsidentin. – Die Aussprache ist geschlossen.

Die Abstimmung findet am Dienstag, 13. Dezember 2022, statt.

Schriftliche Erklärungen (Artikel 171)

Bartosz Arłukowicz (PPE), *na piśmie*. – Dziękuję sprawozdawczyni, pani Pelletier za przygotowanie bardzo dobrego i kompleksowego sprawozdania. W Unii Europejskiej wciąż są państwa, w których władzy nie jest po drodze z osobami z niepełnosprawnościami. Są kraje, które robią w kwestii równouprawnienia naprawdę dużo, ale są i takie, których zaangażowanie od lat pozostaje na poziomie minimalnym. Mamy wciąż dużo do zrobienia.

Ja chciałbym się skupić dziś na dostępie osób z niepełnosprawnościami do korzystania z czynnych i biernych praw wyborczych. Zbliżające się wybory do Parlamentu Europejskiego powinny być przykładem tego, jak organizować i przeprowadzać demokratyczne wybory bez pomijania kogokolwiek. Z raportu Europejskiego Komitetu Ekonomiczno-Społecznego pt. „Rzeczywiste prawa osób z niepełnosprawnościami do głosowania w wyborach do Parlamentu Europejskiego" wiemy, że miliony obywateli UE nie mają możliwości głosowania z powodu rozwiązań organizacyjnych (np. barier technicznych), które nie uwzględniają ich potrzeb wynikających z niepełnosprawności, a skala tego zjawiska jest bardzo nierównomiernie rozłożona pomiędzy poszczególne kraje. Dlatego tak ważna jest nasza dzisiejsza debata i nasze bezkompromisowe rekomendacje dla państw członkowskich. O prawdziwej równości w UE będziemy mogli powiedzieć dopiero wówczas, gdy nikt nie będzie pozbawiany możliwości korzystania z przysługujących mu praw.

Lívia Járóka (NI), *írásban*. – A fogyatékossággal élő személyek egyenlő jogainak biztosítása elengedhetetlenül szükséges egy szociálisan érzékeny, az európai értékek mentén nemcsak szavakban, de tettekben is elkötelezett Európai Unió számára. Hosszú évek óta részletes és igen fontos vita folyik a fogyatékossággal élők jogegyenlősége érdekében itt, az Európai Parlament falai között.

Látnunk kell azonban, hogy ez a szakpolitikai kérdés többdimenziós és rétegzett probléma, amely komplex megközelítést igényel. A fogyatékossággal élő embertársaink között is kiemelt figyelmet érdemelnek a gyermekek, nők és az etnikai kisebbségek közé tartozók, hiszen őket egyéb hátrány is érheti, éri szerte az Unió területén. Ebből kifolyólag törekednünk kell, hogy a jogegyenlőség magvalósulásához vezető út során fókuszáltan törekedjünk az integrációs folyamatok elősegítésére is. Így az oktatás, foglalkoztatás, lakhatás és egészségügy területén olyan összehangolt, a fogyatékossággal élők érdekeit szem előtt tartó programokra van szükség, amelyek képesek kezelni a társadalmi különbségek okozta kihívások teljes spektrumát.

Magyarország elkötelezett a fogyatékossággal élő polgárainak élethelyzet-javítása, jogaiknak biztosítása, munkaerőpiacra történő integrációjuk elősegítése mellett. Javaslom az Európai Parlament számára is a magyar jó gyakorlatok átvételét, a fogyatékossággal élők politikai, társadalmi és gazdasági részvételének ösztönzését, az oktatás, lakhatás, foglalkoztatás és egészségügy területén jelenlévő korlátok tudatos lebontását és a fogyatékossággal élők érdekeinek tényleges szem előtt tartását, az ügy átpolitizálása és ideológiai célokra való felhasználása helyett.

Stefania Zambelli (ID), *per iscritto*. – In Europa ci sono circa 87 milioni di persone con disabilità. I dati correlati a queste persone sono allarmanti: solamente la metà di esse hanno un'occupazione, il 28% si trova a rischio povertà ed esclusione sociale e ben il 52% di esse si sente a rischio discriminazione. Solo nell'ultima settimana, ho letto di due notizie che mi hanno fatto enormemente male: la prima riguarda una ragazza disabile a cui è stato negato l'imbarco all'aeromobile presso l'aeroporto di Bergamo, perché la batteria della sua carrozzina non sarebbe stato conforme; la seconda riguarda un gruppo di ipovedenti a cui è stato negato l'ingresso allo spettacolo «Notre Dame de Paris», nonostante avessero pagato regolare biglietto.

Non è ammissibile nel 2022, dover leggere ancora notizie come queste! È proprio contro la discriminazione che dobbiamo combattere come parlamentari europei, agendo nei diversi settori della società, dal lavoro alla scuola, dalla cultura alla mobilità, affinché le persone con disabilità non soffrano di doppie discriminazioni nella vita di tutti i giorni.

Serve inoltre dare immediata attuazione alla Carta europea della disabilità in tutti gli Stati dell'UE, per un immediato e reciproco riconoscimento dello status di persona disabile. Questi sono impegni che non possiamo più rimandare!

14. Ergebnis der COP27 (Aussprache)

Die Präsidentin. – Als nächster Punkt der Tagesordnung folgt die Aussprache über die Erklärung der Kommission zum Ergebnis der COP27 (2022/2966(RSP)).

Frans Timmermans, *Executive Vice-President of the Commission*. – Madam President, honourable Members, if we want to evaluate COP27, I think we need to start a bit before – a couple of months before – and see where we were internationally, leading into COP27.

I attended several meetings, including the G-20, where major emitters were trying to step back, quite substantially, from the agreements we had reached in Glasgow in COP26. So the months leading up to COP27 weren't very auspicious for the most ambitious amongst us.

Secondly, a confrontation was growing between the developed world and the developing world on the issue of adaptation, but especially on loss and damage. So this combination of major emitters trying to step back from their commitments, and an increasing confrontational attitude from developing countries because they felt not being heard by the developed world, did not bode well for the preparation of COP27.

Now, I think the results are a lot better than what I expected before and I want to start by thanking both the Council and Parliament for playing a very active role on the spot, but especially in the preparation.

Because one of the myths that was created in the months ahead was that because of the war, Europe was stepping back from its commitment in the Green Deal, was digging up a lot of coal and that all our commitments would be lost. And thanks to the very hard work of the co-legislators, we could go to Sharm el-Sheikh and explain very clearly that we are not just sticking to our commitments of reducing our emissions with at least 55% by 2030, but that we would overshoot that commitment already on the basis of the three pieces of legislation agreed between the co-legislators, between Parliament and the Council. So, we could take that thing at the beginning of the second week of COP off the table, and we could still show clearly that we remained ambitious.

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In the days leading up to the end of the COP, tensions were high because of attempts to step away from the commitments in Glasgow, and also because of the proposal put on the table by G77 plus China on a fund for loss and damage, which would mirror earlier funds and which would not look at countries in terms of their role in emissions, but only whether in 1992 they were considered developing countries, yes or no.

I think at some point in close dialogue and cooperation with both the Member States and the ministers present, who were all extremely active during the COP, and the delegation of the European Parliament, we came to the conclusion that Europe should try and bridge these differences by coming up with a plan, especially on loss and damage, that would not start from 1992 but from the situation now. So that would do a couple of things: that would address the responsibility of all those who are major emitters and all those who can afford to take responsibility; that would focus the loss and damage fund on the most vulnerable countries and not spread it out to all developing countries; and that would be able to use what we call the 'mosaic of measures' from all other instruments, including, for instance, reforming the international financial institutions, putting the MDBs in a different position, the private sector engaging with the private sector etc.

When the European Union put this on the table – and I discussed it on behalf of the EU with the Secretary General, with my colleagues from the US and China – especially the US and China were taken aback a bit that we were doing this. China thought that the G77 plus China plan was the one that would carry the day; the Americans thought that there would be no plan at all. So when we came up with this idea, I think we were able to create – as the Secretary General of the UN put it – a new situation where we did not have a confrontation between a classical developing world and a developed world, but we would distinguish, especially on the basis of whether you are a major emitter or not, and look at those countries that needed support more than those who needed less.

I think this was an important breakthrough that allowed us to bring parties closer together and also allowed us to insist on at least not stepping back from our commitments made in Glasgow. And we can use the mitigation work programme now to make sure that these commitments are still solid and strong in the months and the years to come.

All in all, my verdict – as you know – on the mitigation side was negative at the end of the COP. My verdict on the loss and damage fund is positive because it will allow us – if we act collectively and strongly in the months to come – to shape it in a completely different form than previous attempts to address the issue. And the combination between the mitigation work programme and the work on the fund would allow us to shape it in a way that takes our commitments into the future in a positive way.

I know that the incoming presidency of COP is very ambitious on these issues. I also know, we're still faced with huge challenges in the time to come, but all in all, the results of the COP will allow us to move forward, will allow us to bring along the major emitters who, some of them, wanted to step back from the commitments, who are still in to the commitments, and will allow us also in the combination of the just energy transition plans to also take some of the major emitters in the Global South with us in the right direction.

All in all, my verdict today is positive. We would have liked to see much more on mitigation. We got, I think, a good result on loss and damage. I think we also have an opportunity to work very closely with those most vulnerable also in adaptation. And I think, all in all, the European Union showed real leadership, and we were the ones building the bridges, we were the ones who were able to get a result that everybody could sign up to.

Lídia Pereira, *em nome do Grupo PPE.* – Senhora Presidente, as COP sucedem-se, mas os resultados tendem a ser escassos e o tempo urge. Aqui na Europa, há já vários anos que apresentamos resultados, que levamos às sucessivas COP o nosso trabalho de casa feito. Ao mesmo tempo que aumentamos a nossa produtividade e o nosso PIB, temos sido capazes de reduzir as emissões. Aqui, investimos em inovação, em novas tecnologias, em renováveis e exigimos mais das nossas empresas.

Podemos fazer mais, como nas interligações elétricas e na União da Energia. Mas nesta COP27 vimos a ausência de resultados na mais importante das questões - e o Senhor Vice-Presidente da pasta acabou de o referir -, ou seja, na redução das emissões.

Colegas, é nesta parte que, de facto, temos de ter resultados para evitar que se agravem as cheias, os incêndios e as tempestades que todos temos experimentado. Vemos, ouvimos discursos bonitos e motivos de todo o lado, mas poucos compromissos e muito poucos resultados.

De que serve financiarmos os países mais pobres para combater os efeitos das alterações climáticas, se os países que mais poluem continuam a poluir e a agravar esse problema?

Na Europa, temos demonstrado liderança no aumento das metas para 2030, na redução das emissões. Somos o principal financiador da luta contra as alterações climáticas nos países em desenvolvimento, mas não temos sido capazes de ter uma agenda mobilizadora com os maiores poluidores: China, Estados Unidos e Índia. A nossa diplomacia climática não tem tido os resultados necessários e esta é uma reflexão importante que temos de fazer sem demora com a Comissão e o Conselho.

Delara Burkhardt, *im Namen der S&D-Fraktion*. – Frau Präsidentin, liebe Kolleginnen und Kollegen! Wir haben als Europäisches Parlament sehr viele Verbündete im Kampf gegen die Klimakrise getroffen und auch sehr viele Schicksale gehört, zum Beispiel von dem nigerianischen Klimaaktivisten, der nicht weiterstudieren kann, weil Überschwemmungen nicht nur Hunderte Leben in seinem Land gekostet haben, sondern auch seine Uni zerstört haben.

Wir haben von der Umweltministerin der Malediven gehört, die berichtet hat, wie hart sie versucht, unter den Rahmenbedingungen ihren Job zu machen, die aber jetzt schon weiß, dass ihre Tochter nicht sicher sein kann, ob sie weiter dort leben kann, wo ihre Familie ihre Wurzeln hat.

Und wir müssen uns genau vor diesem Hintergrund fragen: Was haben wir auf dieser Klimakonferenz erreicht? Ich würde auch ganz klar zustimmen: Auf der Habenseite steht der Erfolg der Einigung auf einen Fonds für klimabedingte Schäden in den am stärksten vom Klimawandel betroffenen Staaten. Denn er ist ein wichtiger Schritt Richtung globale Klimagerechtigkeit und ermöglicht uns, genau dort zu helfen, wo zum Beispiel jemand nicht mehr studieren kann, weil seine Uni unter Wasser steht. Das ist ein wichtiger Erfolg.

Dieser Erfolg ist auch nur erreichbar gewesen, weil wir einen Kommissionsvizepräsidenten haben, der auch mit dem Mandat dort war, politisch zu verhandeln. Ich finde es sehr wichtig, das noch einmal zu betonen.

Aber es reicht eben auch nicht, nur die Symptome der Klimakrise zu behandeln. Wir müssen die Ursachen bekämpfen. Und hier ist Scharm al-Scheich auf der Stelle getreten, wenn nicht sogar zurückgegangen. Wir sind daran gescheitert, einen klaren Fahrplan Richtung 1,5 Grad aufzustellen. Wir fordern das jedes Jahr, und jedes Jahr sagen wir: Die Zeit wird immer kürzer, und jetzt ist es wirklich so weit, dass wir uns angucken müssen, was für Hausaufgaben das für uns im Europäischen Parlament, aber auch in den europäischen Institutionen bedeutet.

Ganz klar ist die Frage: Was passiert jetzt mit dem Rest des Pakets Fit für 55, mit dem Rest des Grünen Deals, mit REPowerEU? Auch dort ist allein schon mit LULUCF klar geworden: Je ambitionierter wir verhandeln, desto besser können wir auch unseren national festgelegten Beitrag nachreichen. Dementsprechend können wir da wirklich auf die Tube drücken.

Was mir noch sehr wichtig ist zu sagen: Ich hatte große Sorgen wegen der Situation der Menschenrechte vor Ort. Aktivistinnen wurden schikaniert, am Zugang gehindert, teilweise war das sogar für uns im Parlament so. Wir müssen vollkommen klarmachen, dass gerechte Klimapolitik nur dann stattfinden kann, wenn demokratische Bedingungen vorherrschen. Greenwashing von autoritären und diktatorischen Regimen dürfen wir nicht zulassen, gerade weil die nächste COP in Dubai stattfindet. Und auch hier müssen die UN ihre Hausaufgaben machen.

Barry Andrews, *on behalf of the Renew Group*. – Madam President, Commissioner, colleagues, I listened to your speech and I was struck by how you characterised the achievement of loss and damage. And it is an enormous achievement because one felt immediately afterwards that it wasn't presented in that way by the Commission, that somehow or another the G77 position was challenged and maybe there was a better way to do it than loss and damage. And I listened to the distinction you draw between 1992 and today and different developing countries, and all of those are very legitimate.

But this is an enormous achievement – what has been done at COP27 – because for the first time it recognises those who pollute more, those who possess more must do more, and that if you break it, which we did, you fix it, which we should, and that is now locked into the principle of how we're going to approach this issue. It's about climate justice, something that my compatriot Mary Robinson has spoken so passionately about over the years.

And it's an achievement because we have a credibility problem in the European Union. I've just come back from Marrakech, where I had discussions with my African liberal colleagues over two days, and they are struck by the fact that we're opening coal mines, you've mentioned it yourself, Commissioner, they are struck by the fact that we're pricing them out of the LNG market, that we have allowed for loopholes in relation to gas exploration, and they are challenging us to be real partners on this issue. And I sincerely believe that we have to get over the credibility issue that is really challenging the European Union.

And I will say, finally, that I think you are correct in saying that we have made a solid achievement here, but we also cannot gaslight G77 countries with the positions that they rightfully took.

Bas Eickhout, *on behalf of the Verts/ALE Group*. – Madam President, thank you to the Commissioner for the introduction and indeed pointing out that probably the biggest success of Sharm el-Sheikh was indeed the loss and damage fund. And I do indeed have to commend that; Europe took the turn there, which was crucial for having a good outcome there.

But I think we all are very well aware and you mentioned it as well that for the rest Sharm el-Sheikh was a disappointment, especially on ambition and the gap that is still there to staying below the 1.5 degrees. We did not succeed and unfortunately the world did not succeed. And, basically, compared to Glasgow, we lost a year, which you also said after that COP.

I don't want to go looking back now; I think what's now most important is how are we going to prepare for COP28. What are the steps to be taken, and what lessons can be learned? And there I have a couple of questions. First of all, the very simple one, when will Europe increase its NDC? Because that's what we are calling parties for to increase their NDC. We did it when we came out of Glasgow. Now we do it again when we come out of Sharm el-Sheikh. So when will Europe take that step? I think it would be very helpful to hear from you on when you're going to push for that.

Secondly, on fossil subsidies, we are always saying that we want to finish fossil subsidies, but tomorrow we will probably have the last negotiations on RePowerEU, where there will be fossil subsidies. There will be. But I think then mostly important is how to make sure we limit them and how to make sure that at least it's not going to oil, which is also on the table and hopefully can still be defeated. So, I here also really call upon the Commission to take a strong stance and to really support some of the proposals from Parliament.

The clock was not really on 2 minutes. I have no idea where it was, but I'll be brief, but I am sure not at 2 minutes yet, Madam Chair. So that's going to be important as well. But I think the last most important part is how are we going to build alliances with third world countries, former third world countries, to indeed to overcome this north versus south divide. And I think that's also very crucial. And we did not succeed enough last year or this year. So how can we improve that for next year?

Last point – which also my colleague Burkhardt mentioned – it's on what the UN needs to do for the room and the space for the civil society. It was really concerning to see that there was hardly any space for civil society; at a COP there needs to be space for civil society, so I would also like to hear from the Commission what kind of actions towards the United Nations we're going to take to ensure that civil society can play its role when it's needed.

Montag, 12. Dezember 2022

Puhetta johti HEIDI HAUTALA

varapuhemies

Nicola Procaccini, *a nome del gruppo ECR*. – Signora Presidente, onorevoli colleghi, l'unico risultato della COP27 è stato la creazione del fondo «loss and damage», soldi che verranno erogati dai paesi più sviluppati a quelli in via di sviluppo, malgrado questi ultimi si siano rifiutati di impegnarsi nella riduzione delle emissioni di gas serra.

Francamente non condivido questa ideologia che impone l'autoflagellazione all'Europa e alle più evolute democrazie del mondo, come se lo sviluppo fosse un crimine da espiare, ma ciò che contesto è il principio secondo cui chi inquina di meno, dovrà pagare chi inquina di più, che da questo trae anche un ingiusto vantaggio nella competizione economica mondiale. Non a caso tra i beneficiari ci sarà probabilmente la Cina, che da sola emette cinque volte la CO_2 dell'intera Unione europea.

Arrivederci alla COP28, Commissario Timmermans, che si terrà negli Emirati Arabi Uniti, un altro paese campione di sostenibilità ambientale e di diritti umani, che sicuramente troverà degli estimatori in quest'Aula, come il Qatar.

Mick Wallace, *on behalf of The Left Group*. – Madam President, the EU's proposal at COP to expand the loss and damage donor pool reinterprets what loss and damage is about. Instead of recognising and acting on its historic responsibility, the rich developed countries want to shift the blame and get other countries that do not have even remotely the same history of emissions or the same emissions per capita to pay into the fund. It's climate colonialism.

The EU proposal was made knowing full well that China and other non-annex countries would never agree, because it does not respect the delineation of the UNFCCC annexes, which create the categories of developed and developing countries. Research shows Annex 1 countries are responsible for over 90% of historic emissions. According to the Overseas Development Institute, the US's fair share of climate finance is 43%, but the US pays a fraction of this, and getting the US to cough up is probably the biggest challenge for climate victims seeking justice.

Now, if we are to get money from countries like Pakistan, countries which are the least responsible for the problems they are facing, suffering from the impacts of climate change, we're going to have to actually dismantle Bretton Woods. We have to fix our financial system, because it's broken as it stands.

Edina Tóth (NI). – Elnök Asszony! A COP27 klímacsúcs mérlege teljes kudarc. Szomorú, hogy az idei csúcson semmilyen igazi kötelezettségvállalás nem született, s komoly aggodalomra ad okot az is, hogy a tavalyihoz képest nagyon kevesen újították meg vállalásaikat. Mi történt e helyett? A fejlődő országoknak nyújtandó, még kidolgozatlan pénzügyi támogatásokon túl Timmermans biztos úr a Bizottság elhibázott klímaideológiáját próbálta csupán promotálni. Ki kell mondani, hogy az uniós klímapolitikánk főtárgyalója lényegében meggátolja a klímavédelemért folytatandó hatékony küzdelmet.

Az EU egyedül nem képes megakadályozni a negatív folyamtokat, csak közös erővel, Európán kívüli partnereinkkel együttműködve lehet a klímavédelmi kérdésekre megoldást találni. Az átgondolatlan, a klímapolitikát is ellehetetlenítő szankciók helyett valódi és hatékony, globális szintű klímavédelemre van szükség.

Peter Liese (PPE). – Frau Präsidentin, Kolleginnen und Kollegen! Auch für mich war Scharm al-Scheich eine Enttäuschung: 1,5 Grad steht im Papier. Aber es gab keine Fortschritte in Richtung 1,5 Grad, und was *loss and damage* angeht, finde ich es wirklich schrecklich, dass es uns nicht gelungen ist, China mit ins Boot zu nehmen. China muss sich beteiligen, muss seiner Verantwortung gerecht werden.

Für mich gibt es zwei wichtige Konsequenzen aus diesem nicht zufriedenstellenden Ergebnis.

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Erstens: Unsere Klimadiplomatie muss besser werden. Wir machen zu Hause sehr viel Gutes. Ich möchte das gar nicht persönlich sagen, aber ich glaube, wir müssen besser werden. Wir alle gemeinsam, da hat vielleicht auch das Parlament eine Aufgabe. Aber wir müssen in die Vorbereitung dieser COPs gemeinsam mehr investieren.

Zweitens: Bei der Ambition sollten wir nicht zurücktreten. Natürlich haben wir jetzt eine Krise, und kurzfristig müssen wir in einigen Ländern mehr Kohle einsetzen. Aber mittel- und langfristig gibt es für alle drei Krisen – hohe Preise, Abhängigkeit von Russland und Klimawandel – nur eine Antwort: Die heißt mehr erneuerbare Energie und mehr Energieeffizienz. Deswegen: Fit für 55 verschärfen und nicht schwächen.

Heléne Fritzon (S&D). – Fru talman, herr kommissionär. Det var både spännande och viktigt att vara på plats på COP27 i Egypten, men det var med oro och besvikelse som jag lämnade klimattoppmötet. Jag hade önskat så mycket mer. Jag känner oro över de kvinnor och barn som släpper ut minst, men drabbas värst när till exempel en tredjedel av Pakistans stora land hamnar under vatten. Jag känner besvikelse över att så små framsteg gjordes i förhandlingarna för att bromsa den globala upphettningen.

Men jag är också stolt. Stolt över den roll som EU och vår kommissionär Timmermans spelade i förhandlingarna. EU blev på riktigt bryggan som öppnade för den fond som ska hantera klimatkrisens skador. EU tog ansvar och höjde ribban ytterligare. Men till nästa möte blir EU:s ledarskap helt avgörande och vi måste hålla i det. Vi måste nämligen ytterligare höja våra ambitioner. Om vi ska klara av att nå Parisavtalets mål är det på riktigt bråttom nu. Ska vi klara 1,5-gradersmålet måste vi lägga i en högre växel. Och det är vi skyldiga, det är vi faktiskt skyldiga, alla oskyldiga kvinnor, barn och unga som släpper ut allra minst men drabbas allra värst.

Karin Karlsbro (Renew). – Fru talman! Herr kommissionär! Kollegor! När världen samlades i Egypten för COP27 var det i skuggan av krig och kris. Vi brottas med skenande energipriser och inflation. Men trots gigantiska utmaningar kan inte klimatet vänta, och jag önskar att jag inte skulle behöva säga det, men COP27 var ännu en besvikelse. Det skulle behövas enighet om snabbare åtgärder för att få ner utsläppen på riktigt.

Men samtidigt är jag stolt över att EU lever upp till förväntningarna och visar ledarskap. Under förra veckan nådde vi överenskommelser om ny lagstiftning om hållbara batterier och världens första lag mot global avskogning. Det kommer att göra stor skillnad och visar EU:s tydliga ledarskap. Alldeles strax fortsätter vi förhandlingarna om en gränsjusteringsmekanism för klimatet. Så låt oss nu använda detta till inspiration för att förbereda ett framgångsrikt klimattoppmöte möte nästa gång.

Marie Toussaint (Verts/ALE). – Madame la Présidente, la COP 27 est un échec douloureux. Certains comme vous, Monsieur le Vice-Président, ont reproché à la Chine, à l'Inde ou aux États-Unis d'entraver l'action climatique, avec raison parfois. Mais comment pouvons-nous nous-mêmes prétendre être exemplaires, quand nous persistons à investir dans les énergies fossiles?

Je veux saluer ici la proposition qui a été posée sur la table sur les pertes et dommages. Mais comment ne pas déplorer l'ambiguïté européenne en la matière? L'Europe demande donc aux pays en développement de se séparer des énergies fossiles, de sorte à mériter l'argent des pays occidentaux. Mais la réalité, c'est qu'en tant qu'Europe, nous avons à peine réduit notre empreinte carbone depuis 1990, et qu'à la réparation de notre dette climatique d'antan s'ajoute aujourd'hui celle liée à l'inaction climatique actuelle.

La réalité, c'est que les États membres et leurs entreprises, parfois malheureusement soutenus par la Commission, ont signé de nouveaux contrats pétro-gaziers pendant la COP 27 avec le Sénégal, l'Égypte ou encore le Qatar, au détriment des droits de l'homme, de la corruption ou de l'évidence climatique, qui veut que les énergies fossiles restent désormais sous les sols. La réalité, c'est que malgré les appels répétés des Nations unies à condamner pénalement ceux qui portent atteinte au climat, nous ne l'avons, ici, pas encore fait.

Alors, Monsieur le Vice-Président, nous n'avons plus de temps à perdre. Il nous faut désormais, chers collègues, passer aux actes.

Marina Mesure (The Left). – Madame la Présidente, chers collègues, les COP se succèdent, et les promesses faites durant celles-ci ressemblent un peu aux bonnes résolutions du Nouvel An, celles que l'on fait le soir et que l'on trahit le lendemain.

Certes, la création d'un fonds de compensation pour les pays du Sud est une bonne nouvelle. Il faut dire que c'est la moindre des choses, puisque la prospérité du Nord s'est fondée sur l'exploitation du Sud et que ces pays subissent désormais les conséquences dramatiques du dérèglement climatique, qu'ils n'ont pas causé.

De son côté, l'Europe veut faire figure de bonne élève, mais elle ne se donne pas clairement les moyens de ses ambitions. Il suffit pour cela de voir les derniers choix politiques qui ont été faits dans cet hémicycle, notamment les accords de libre-échange, qui favorisent toujours le grand déménagement du monde.

Que dire de notre gestion de la crise énergétique? Nous parlons là d'un enjeu majeur, qui touche aussi bien le climat que 44 millions d'Européens. Alors que le marché de l'énergie nous conduit directement aux pénuries d'électricité et à la flambée des prix, la Commission nous rétorque systématiquement et aveuglément qu'il faut faire confiance au marché. Nous n'avons pas confiance en ce marché ni en sa vision court-termiste guidée par des intérêts privés et par le profit immédiat. Nous avons besoin d'une vision à long terme, où la puissance publique recense les besoins de la population et agit pour y répondre.

Chers collègues, pour réussir enfin les prochaines étapes, il va falloir le dire clairement: le marché et la planification écologique sont incompatibles. Il est temps d'en tirer les conséquences adéquates.

Jessica Polfjärd (PPE). – Fru talman! Herr kommissionär! Vi nås varje dag av rapporter som alla pekar åt samma håll. Klimatutmaningen vi står inför kräver ambitiösa och effektiva åtgärder. På plats i Egypten fick vi också vittnesmål om hur de pengar som är destinerade för utbildning, i till exempel Maldiverna, idag måste gå till klimatåtgärder. Det riskerar barnens skolgång och vi ser också att vi behöver ta detta på allvar.

Vi kan också se att det betyder någonting när EU faktiskt dyker upp med konkreta lagstiftningar under armen. Vi har överenskommelser om hur vi ska sänka våra utsläpp, öka våra kolsänkor och ställa om våra vägtransporter. Det är en tydlig signal om att vi är ambitiösa med våra klimatmål.

Jag tror att jag kan tala för alla när jag säger att COP var en blandning av både sött och salt. Salt, eftersom sanningen, som vi måste acceptera, är den att de åtgärder vi hittills arbetat fram inte är tillräckliga för att hålla målet om 1,5 grader vid liv. Det är tillkortakommanden som hotar Parisavtalets kärna. Men också sött, för vi fick många vittnesmål på plats om att industrin, näringslivet, är beredd att göra jobbet. Det är sällan man blir glad när man får kritik, men många av näringslivets representanter menade: ”Ni måste springa fortare. Politiken måste springa fortare, för informationen finns redan på plats och vi är beredda att göra jobbet.”

Niels Fuglsang (S&D). – Madam President, Commissioner, colleagues, this climate summit in Egypt was indeed a disappointment, taking into consideration that we did not manage to agree on the reduction targets that we need, we did not manage to increase the speed of the climate action sufficiently.

We did manage one positive thing, which was the compensation fund that the rich countries have to pay to the less rich countries, compensating them for the climate damage which is being done, which is mainly our responsibility in the rich world historically, in a historical perspective.

The EU has been much criticised. I think the EU did play a positive role. I think the EU was really the only actor who took responsibility to increase among few actors, but one of the greatest powers that increased its reduction target and also put the fund on the compensation question on the agenda. That was the EU's contribution.

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I think we need to see much more of that positive contribution from the European Union because we need to speed up action. The climate targets that we have are way too low. If we also look out in the world, Russia climate neutral by 2060, China 2060, India 2070-20 years too late. That's not good enough. The EU needs to inspire. The EU also needs to push by saying we want to trade with you, but only if you also increase your reduction targets and do more. And that's the legislation that we work on now and we will need to get that done as soon as possible.

Pär Holmgren (Verts/ALE). – Fru talman! Kommissionär Timmermans! Jag gör samma analys som många andra när det gäller COP27. Små steg i rätt riktning när det gäller arbetet med ”loss and damage”, skador och förluster, men tyvärr en stor besvikelse när det gäller det väldigt centrala arbetet med att snabbt få ner våra utsläpp.

När det gäller arbetet med loss and damage har jag en fråga till kommissionären: Hur ska vi i EU och resten av den rika världen bättra på vårt rykte? Vi har ju tidigare också lovat pengar till fattiga, utsatta delar av världen utan att leverera. Den här gången måste vi verkligen leverera.

När det gäller det riktigt centrala i klimatfrågan – att snabbt få ner utsläppen – är det bara konstatera: Visst, vi höjde ambitionerna lite grann inom EU inför mötet, men vi är ändå fortfarande långt ifrån det som krävs enligt oberoende vetenskap för att vara i linje med Parisavtalet. Vad ska vi göra nu, snabbt, så att vi börjar närma oss att vara i närheten av Parisavtalet i god tid före nästa klimattoppmöte, COP28?

Pierre Larrouturou (S&D). – Madame la Présidente, chers amis, chers collègues, en arrivant au Parlement européen aujourd'hui, j'ai été scandalisé par le poids des lobbies, qui ont réussi à corrompre certains de nos collègues. Honte à eux! Toutefois, en quittant le sommet sur le climat, j'ai été scandalisé par le poids des lobbies du pétrole, qui ont obtenu qu'il n'y ait pas un mot, pas une ligne sur la fin des nouveaux forages pétroliers.

Frans Timmermans l'a dit: la seule avancée importante de cette COP, c'est un nouveau fonds pour aider les pays les plus touchés par les catastrophes climatiques. C'est une avancée très importante, et l'Europe a beaucoup poussé en ce sens. Mais on risque une cassure profonde entre les pays du Nord et les pays du Sud si cela reste une nouvelle promesse et s'il n'y a pas d'argent. Les pays vulnérables n'en peuvent plus des promesses, ils veulent des actes. Bonne nouvelle: notre Parlement, depuis trois ans, propose des solutions, dont une petite taxe sur la spéculation, de 0,1 %, qui pourrait rapporter 57 milliards d'euros chaque année.

Juste après la COP, j'ai pu rencontrer António Guterres, le secrétaire général des Nations unies, et María Fernanda Espinosa, l'ancienne présidente de l'Assemblée générale des Nations unies, laquelle me disait: «Cette taxe, ce n'est pas une solution de financement, c'est une solution de réconciliation entre le Nord et le Sud.» Oui, une solution de réconciliation.

Alors, pour éviter le chaos, il est urgent de créer cette taxe et d'avoir un accord avant la prochaine COP.

Michael Bloss (Verts/ALE). – Frau Präsidentin, Herr Kommissar Timmermans! 2022 war ein verlorenes Jahr für den Klimaschutz. Warum? Wir brechen das Pariser Klimaschutzübereinkommen, und wir sind auf einem tödlichen 3-Grad-Erderhitzungsweg. Deswegen haben wir in Glasgow vor einem Jahr gesagt: In diesem Jahr 2022 erhöhen wir alle unsere Klimaziele, um 1,5 Grad einzuhalten. Und was ist seitdem passiert? Nichts.

Sie, Herr Timmermans, haben danach erklärt, dass die Europäische Union ihre Klimaziele nicht erhöhen wird, weil wir schon genug tun. Wenn alle so handeln, dann geht der Planet vor die Hunde. Machen Sie diesen Fehler nicht noch einmal. Bekennen Sie sich zu einem höheren europäischen Klimaziel: 60 % sind möglich, 65 % sind nötig. Und fordern Sie das Gleiche von unseren Partnerinnen und Partnern ein, denn 2023 darf nicht wieder für den Klimaschutz verloren gehen.

Ciarán Cuffe (Verts/ALE). – Madam President, Executive Vice-President Timmermans, I compliment you on the role you played at COP, along with my colleague Eamon Ryan from Ireland, to create the loss and damage fund. But we have created a vessel; we now have to fill it. The challenge in the years ahead is to find the funding and deliver it to the people that need it most.

Above all of this, we have these headline commitments; we've had them for 10, 20 years. We now have to dig down at a granular level, and those of us in public life must give the commitment to the decisions that are made in this Parliament every day of the week on the files that we hold. And it's all very well to be in favour of climate action in theory at a high level but to resist it in practice. That is the real challenge that we have: to communicate climate action not just in the rhetoric at these annual meetings – whether it be at COP15 in Montreal, COP27 in Sharm el-Sheikh – but in the legislative files.

And I fear that a lot of the commitment to climate action is skin deep. It goes as far as signing on the dotted line at a high level, but not delivering us in reality. And that, friends, is what we have to deliver in these rooms in the months and years ahead.

Pyynnöstä myönnettävät puheenvuorot

Sara Cerdas (S&D). – Senhora Presidente, Senhor Comissário, a COP27 representou tanto progresso como estagnação. É, obviamente, muito positivo o acordo sobre as perdas e danos, que reconhece que há regiões mundiais mais vulneráveis que outras, tal como as regiões ultraperiféricas, entre outras, na UE. Porém, em tudo o resto ficou aquém do que era esperado.

É preciso despoletar uma transformação profunda e reconhecer as ligações intrínsecas entre a crise climática, a crise da biodiversidade e a crise dos oceanos, através do fim dos subsídios aos combustíveis fósseis e do investimento nas renováveis, assegurar a responsabilização do setor têxtil, combater a pandemia do plástico, a desinformação e a insustentabilidade. Simplesmente, não há mais tempo a perder se queremos responder aos apelos dos nossos mais jovens, das gerações mais novas e garantir o futuro do nosso planeta.

Catherine Chabaud (Renew). – Madame la Présidente, Monsieur le Commissaire, pendant que vous étiez à Charm el-Cheikh, j'ai décidé de reprendre la mer et j'ai traversé l'Atlantique dans une course en solitaire, avec l'ambition de porter les enjeux des océans et de leur donner de la lumière. J'ai pu au passage constater les effets du changement climatique sur le dérèglement météorologique – on pourra en parler.

J'ai cofondé la plateforme Océan et Climat et je vois que la place de l'océan grandit dans les différentes négociations climatiques. Malheureusement, elle est très loin de ce qu'elle devrait être. Je pense que l'Union européenne, qui dispose du premier espace maritime au monde, devrait non seulement rattraper son retard, mais être encore beaucoup plus ambitieuse pour intégrer l'océan et les écosystèmes marins et côtiers dans la réponse aux enjeux climatiques.

On sait cartographier les écosystèmes du carbone bleu et on sait développer une finance bleue. Je me suis laissé dire que Dubaï avait décidé que la COP 28 serait une «*Blue COP*». Alors je demande: est-ce que l'Union européenne va s'associer à cette initiative, et est-ce que vous allez enfin pouvoir intégrer un peu plus l'océan dans la réponse de l'Union européenne aux objectifs de l'accord de Paris et, plus généralement, dans les politiques publiques?

Clare Daly (The Left). – Madam President, as we've had a lot of talk about lobbying today, let us register that the COP delegations were able to benefit from the advice of 636 representatives from the oil and gas industry. Of course, surprise, surprise, the end deal had no mention of any phase-out of fossil fuels in the final decision. Fossil fuels at the very heart of our global CO_2 emissions.

But of course, the COP wasn't a disaster for everyone. Fourteen international gas agreements were sealed or announced. Germany even signed a partnership with Egypt for gas supplies on the eve of the World Climate Summit. And yes, we have had talk about the historic loss and damage fund. But seriously, USD 360 million? Pakistan alone has suffered losses of USD 30 billion. Globally, there has been USD 200 billion in costs of extreme weather this year alone.

What happened to the promise in 2009 that there was going to be a fund of USD 100 billion a year by 2020? It's very clear, capitalism is not going to solve the climate problem. We can't rely on events sponsored by Coca Cola, the world's biggest plastic producer. We need to take action ourselves.

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Javi López (S&D). – Señora presidenta, señor vicepresidente Timmermans, todos nos preguntamos después de la COP 27 si fue una buena COP o una mala COP. Probablemente fue una COP difícil, y usted lo sabe mejor que nadie. Todos estos tipos de encuentros acaban con un sabor agridulce. Hay sombras, que hemos mencionado: la dificultad para mantener los objetivos y ambiciones relativos a la mitigación; la brecha que continúa existiendo entre la ciencia, nuestros objetivos y los compromisos nacionales que cada uno de los países está aportando; y la dificultad para continuar con este compromiso del grado y medio y la eliminación de los combustibles fósiles.

Pero también hay luces, y hay que destacarlas. Algunas de las luces: la creación del Fondo de pérdidas sin daños, que es un enorme logro para la justicia climática, de apoyo y ayuda para los más vulnerables; y, entre las luces, también figura el papel jugado por la Unión Europea, por Frans Timmermans, por la Comisión y sus Estados miembros, buscando transacciones, creando puentes y buscando soluciones. Porque hay que recordar que el multilateralismo siempre le sienta muy bien a la Unión Europea y siempre sabemos jugar nuestras cartas para encontrar soluciones.

(Pyynnöstä myönnettävät puheenvuorot päättyvät)

Frans Timmermans, *Executive Vice-President of the Commission*. – Madam President, I will try to answer some of the questions that were put on the table in my response here.

So, when will we change our NDC? Let's – and I call upon all of you – finish as quickly as we can all the trilogues that are ongoing on Fit for 55. Once we've finish the trilogues, we can establish where these trilogues will take us in terms of our emission reductions. Then we can update the NDC so that we can say we have put in our climate law a binding reduction of at least 55% by 2030 on the basis of all the results of our trilogues and the decisions we have taken. We can now announce an X amount that we will reach. That would probably, most certainly already now, lead to a more ambitious NDC, but I have to state very clearly, we do not change our climate law. Climate law remains as it is. We just put in the latest results, when we have them, of all the trilogues into our NDC, and that will certainly lead to a more ambitious NDC.

So, how do we limit the exploration of fossil fuels was another question. I think by speeding up the implementation, by reducing demand, which is something sadly we speak about not enough. We should be making a much, much bigger case for the reduction of energy consumption. Secondly, by speeding up our transition to renewables, not just in Europe, but especially helping developing countries choose renewables before they choose especially the most polluting fossil fuels. For that, they need the possibility to invest.

We need to change the way the MDBs function; we need to share technology more; we need to create industrial ecosystems that will allow the developing countries to be part of that. Then, obviously, it is a much better proposition to invest in renewables than to keep investing in fossil fuels.

Having said all that, it is without any doubt that I have to say that natural gas in particular will play a role in the transition towards climate neutrality – it plays that role in Europe. We cannot deny others use of that natural gas as a transitional energy carrier if we're doing that ourselves; that would be highly hypocritical. In that dialogue, the introduction of green hydrogen plays a huge role in all of this. This could also help us limit the exploration of fossil fuels. With a number of African countries, you see that this is working. But then we have to get our homework done on all the other issues that I just mentioned.

This leads to alliances with the Global South. I think the Global South really welcomed the EU's position on the loss and damage fund. But now we have to prove that we mean business. That's what we have to do from now on in the weeks and months that follow. The attitude of the Global South, especially small island developing states and African countries, they were surprised and actually intrigued and they wanted us to move forward with them. But we have to prove that we can actually do that. I would say, on the whole scope, not just on the fund, but also how we share technology, how we help them introduce renewables, etc., that it is very important for us to do.

Now, I will be travelling to Dubai early next year, in the first weeks of the New Year, to discuss the preparation of the next COP. High on my list will be space for civil society. This is of extreme importance to make very clear to the incoming presidency and to the UN system, by the way, that space for civil society is going to be an essential element, a crucial element in how the COP should function. The uniqueness of the COP, to a large extent, is because of the participation of civil society, and this should never be lost.

By the way, I will also then bring up the issue of the Blue COP with the Emirates and see what their plans are, and I certainly would like to continue to work with them on that.

Is China beneficiary of the loss and damage fund? Well, no, of course not. That's the whole idea behind the proposal the EU made. It should be directed at the most vulnerable and the contribution should come from the richest country, the countries doing well and also the major emitters. Now, even if you look at historic emissions, and I say this to those who talk about history, China is right up there with the major emitters. Even if you just look at historic emissions, because of the enormous amounts of their emissions. So there is no way that China can keep hiding behind the status of a developing country.

This is something that is dawning also on the G77, this idea that there's for all eternity going to be G77 plus China is no longer a given anymore. Part of our diplomacy is also directed at creating alliances with the Global South, but also at calling China to take more of its responsibility. By the way, China is suffering a lot from the climate crisis and is investing massively in renewables and in other areas. So who knows? They might surprise us, but we will have to continue this dialogue very intensively to make sure they peak out well before 2030, because otherwise, attaining 1.5 is going to be almost impossible, if not impossible.

Now, climate is not an ideology. Climate policy is based on science. I would argue the opposite: neglecting the science has become an ideology, right up to the flat-Earthers. So if you want to talk about ideology, then talk about that ideology. We are led by science and the scientific evidence is overwhelming. We would be amiss, we would neglect our duty as politicians in this time and age, if we did not act upon science. What world would we then give to our children and grandchildren if we had just neglected science? I think that would be the real, horrible ideology.

Now, on the issue of the markets, yes, there are many things you can say about the market and where it doesn't function. But you cannot decarbonise our economy without putting a price on carbon. The one instrument that has worked extremely well and is being copied, by the way, by other parts of the world is the European emissions trading scheme, which has used market elements to put a price on carbon and created a market that is working better and better to decarbonise our economy and to give certainty to economic actors in the long term. So don't dismiss the market outright, then you're also in the domain of ideology.

I would also like to take issue with those who said Europe didn't pay up. If you look at the adaptation fund, if you look at the USD 100 billion, Europe did pay up; we did do our part. We have not been able to convince others to do their part. There's still a lot of work to do there, but I don't think Europe should blame itself for not doing its part. With the USD 27 billion we have contributed, we do more than our fair share for that. I am more than willing to defend doing more, but we should also step up our efforts to convince the Americans, the Chinese and others to take more of their responsibility, and to convince some of the Gulf States, which are still saying they are developing countries, to do more in that area. So let's continue to work on that.

All in all, Madam President, there is a lot of work to do. I share partly the disappointment of this House in terms of what we did, what we couldn't achieve on emissions. I do want to insist on the peaking out. I do want to insist on the end, on the phasing out, of fossil fuels – things we need to work on. But I do say that Europe has given the example by having a plan, by being concrete on where we want to go, and in that way we can perhaps convince more and more other developed countries in the Global North to do the same.

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We saw it with many countries in the Global North that are following our example. Now, in the alliance, we could forge ahead with the most vulnerable countries in the Global South. We can also demonstrate that we mean business to make sure that those who are most vulnerable, who have no responsibility for where we are now, but are suffering in such a way that they cannot afford to address, should see help coming from us, support coming from us, and the understanding that we're in this together.

Puhemies. – Keskustelu on päättynyt.

Kirjalliset lausumat (171 artikla)

Daniel Buda (PPE), *în scris.* – Timp de două săptămâni, actori politici și organizații interguvernamentale au încercat să găsească soluții la una dintre cele mai acute probleme contemporane-încălzirea globală.

Uniunea Europeană a declarat că va sprijini unul dintre cele mai dificile puncte de pe ordinea de zi, finanțarea țărilor afectate de dezastrele provocate de climă.

Este nevoie, în primul rând, de asistența financiară, tehnologică și de consolidare a capacităților de care au nevoie țările cele mai vulnerabile pentru a-și reduce emisiile de gaze cu efect de seră și pentru a se adapta la efectele inevitabile ale schimbărilor climatice.

Este nevoie parteneriate concrete pentru atenuarea schimbărilor climatice și mai multă solidaritate cu țările cele mai afectate.

Dar, în același timp, această tranziție trebuie să țină cont realitățile actuale. Deciziile trebuie să fie ancorate în realitate, fără a afecta capacitățile de producție sau locurile de muncă. Cu alte cuvinte, este nevoie de o tranziție justă.

15. Eine langfristige Vision für die ländlichen Gebiete der EU (Aussprache)

Puhemies. – Esityslistalla on seuraavana Isabel Carvalhaisin maatalouden ja maaseudun kehittämisen valiokunnan puolesta laatima mietintö EU:n pitkän aikavälin maaseutuvisiosta (2021/2254(INI)) (A9-0269/2022).

Isabel Carvalhais, *Rapporteur.* – Senhora Presidente, Caros Colegas, eu entendo as zonas rurais como decisivas na resposta aos grandes desafios societais que enfrentamos, em particular, nestes tempos difíceis, com uma guerra em curso na Ucrânia infligida pela Rússia e ainda com as consequências da pandemia. O futuro das zonas rurais, que se estendem por 80% do território da União Europeia, é, mais do que nunca, da maior relevância para a segurança alimentar da Europa e para o sucesso do Pacto Ecológico Europeu.

Mas, mais do que isto, é sobretudo o imperativo ético e político que os homens, as mulheres, as crianças, os jovens, os idosos, enfim, todas as pessoas que vivem no mundo rural, tenham condições iguais às de qualquer outro cidadão da União Europeia para poder fazer pleno uso da sua cidadania.

Por isso, Caros Colegas, há que fazer muito mais e melhor, porque aquilo que temos visto é mais do que insuficiente. Já disse aqui noutros momentos que a comunicação da Comissão Europeia sobre a visão a longo prazo para as zonas rurais da União Europeia é muito bem-vinda, mas que não posso deixar de lamentar que a sua apresentação tenha sido tão tardia, precisamente numa fase já avançada da programação dos principais instrumentos do Quadro Financeiro Plurianual, em particular os ligados à política de coesão e à política agrícola de desenvolvimento rural. Lamento também a falta de explicitação de metas concretas a atingir.

O pacto rural, o mecanismo *rural proofing*, o observatório rural e o plano de ação são iniciativas muito positivas, mas que precisam agora de ser materializadas, contando com metas claras de concretização. São também precisas já ações mais imediatas, porque as áreas rurais, Caros Colegas, não podem esperar.

A Comissão deve assegurar, desde logo, que a dimensão territorial rural seja devidamente contemplada no desenho da ação legislativa e deve avaliar anualmente a sua aplicação e impacto nos planos estratégicos da PAC, nos programas da Política de Coesão e nos Planos de Recuperação e Resiliência. Em paralelo, todas as políticas e fundos da União Europeia, tanto em regime de gestão partilhada como em regime de gestão direta, devem ser chamados a contribuir para o desenvolvimento das zonas rurais. A Comissão deve ainda adotar medidas legislativas e não legislativas, de forma a melhorar a eficácia das políticas atuais, trabalhando, por exemplo, na remoção dos obstáculos que persistem na abordagem aos multifundos e ajudando a desenvolver abordagens mais integrativas nas áreas rurais, assim como na melhoria das sinergias e da coordenação entre os instrumentos de financiamento da União Europeia e entre estes e os instrumentos nacionais.

Pedimos também que sejam adotadas rapidamente medidas legislativas que permitam, por exemplo, o alargamento da abordagem do fundo principal às intervenções cofinanciadas por mais do que um fundo de gestão partilhada e a simplificação da sua aplicação, assim como a possibilidade de transferência de recursos financeiros entre todos os fundos de gestão partilhada quando, e apenas quando, vise a concretização de estratégias territoriais rurais concretas, algo que neste momento não é possível. Simultaneamente, os Estados-Membros devem também atender aos desafios específicos das suas zonas rurais durante a execução dos atuais programas do Quadro Financeiro Plurianual. Devem, muito em particular, disponibilizar os investimentos necessários para a inclusão social, para a criação de emprego, para a promoção da competitividade da economia rural e para estimular uma transição digital e ecológica que seja realmente justa. Devem também fomentar o princípio de parceria, ultrapassando as resistências que ainda existem a este nível, assim como o envolvimento mais forte dos agentes locais na construção de soluções adaptadas às suas comunidades.

Esta é também a hora de começar a refletir sobre o próximo período de programação e sobre a criação de um contexto que garanta a prosperidade e o bem-estar para as nossas comunidades rurais. A visão de longo prazo para as zonas rurais deve evoluir no sentido de se tornar uma verdadeira estratégia rural a nível da União Europeia, que inclua todas as diferentes políticas que relevam para a sua concretização, de modo a ser totalmente integrada em futuros períodos de programação.

Senhora Presidente, Caros Colegas, é este o momento de enviar uma mensagem clara e consequente às zonas rurais de toda a Europa de que queremos ser parte ativa na defesa das suas comunidades e na revitalização dos seus territórios, de que estamos genuinamente empenhados não apenas em proclamá-lo, mas efetivamente em fazê-lo.

Krzysztof Hetman, *autor projektu opinii Komisji Rozwoju Regionalnego*. – Pani Przewodnicząca! Pani Komisarz! Szanowni Państwo! Obszary wiejskie to aż 30% mieszkańców Wspólnoty, którzy niestety w dalszym ciągu borykają się z wieloma problemami. Brak dostępu do podstawowych usług, połączeń drogowych i odpowiedniej komunikacji, wykluczenie cyfrowe czy utrudniony dostęp do edukacji to tylko niektóre z nich. Prowadzą one też zresztą do kolejnego bardzo niebezpiecznego zjawiska, jakim jest depopulacja obszarów wiejskich. Aby zaradzić tym problemom, potrzebujemy jasnej strategii i spójnych działań na poziomie Unii Europejskiej.

Natomiast namawiałbym wszystkich do tego, aby zmienić paradygmat myślenia o wsparciu obszarów wiejskich, bo my przez ostatnie lata, wiele lat, ciągle podejmujemy działania i zastanawiamy się, w jaki sposób zatrzymać ludzi na tych obszarach wiejskich. A ja uważam, że trzeba zmienić całkowicie sposób myślenia i zastanowić się, jak namówić choć jedną osobę do tego, żeby wróciła na te obszary wiejskie, bądź namówić nowe osoby, aby chciały zamieszkać na tych obszarach wiejskich. Ponieważ jedna taka namówiona osoba, która powróci na obszary wiejskie, będzie warta dziesięciu osób, które będą chciały tam zostać. I to będzie najlepszy dowód na to, że nasze polityki przynoszą efekt i sukces. Tak że odwagi w myśleniu.

Dubravka Šuica, *Vice-President of the Commission*. – Madam President, I want to thank honourable Member, Isabel Carvalhais. Your work, and that of the co-rapporteurs and Members of this House demonstrates the importance of the long-term vision and the added value of the Rural Pact. Your report welcomes the Rural Vision as a valuable opportunity for coordinated and reinforced actions on rural areas. The Commission is committed to ensuring that rural areas remain high on the European Union's political agenda. Both Commission and Parliament are aligned on the challenges and opportunities that rural areas face in the green and digital transitions.

Montag, 12. Dezember 2022

Without forgetting that there is another crucial transition underway, the demographic transition, that perhaps is more gradual but no less significant in the long run. The purpose of this vision is to make rural areas more prosperous, better connected, more dynamic, more attractive places for people to live and work in, while preserving their essential character.

Food security is a key concern right now. Linked to this is the issue of food waste. It is the first topic for deliberation in the new generation of European citizens panels inspired by the Conference on the Future of Europe. The climate and biodiversity crisis and our food security objectives all remind us how vital rural areas and farmers are to our food security. Essentially, they help guarantee an economically, ecologically and socially sustainable production.

I welcome your clear messages on the need to improve the basic services and to address the growing discontent among rural populations. This is key to our economy, our society and our democracy. We must continue the dialogue within the Rural Pact framework on how to improve the representation of rural people at all levels of governance. I understand your concerns when it comes to ensuring European Union funds and policies complement one another in their bid to support rural areas in the years to come.

I welcome the points on Article 174 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union. We will thoroughly study the rapporteur's proposal on the synergies and multi-fund approach. There is a common understanding on the need for improvement. We will also carefully analyse your proposal for the future beyond 2027. Around EUR 100 billion from the European Agricultural Fund for the rural development budget were made available to fund the rural development programmes in the 2014-2020 period. In cohesion policy, EUR 33 billion for plans for investments in rural areas.

The Commission works to ensure positive outcomes for rural areas in both the cohesion policy operational programmes and the common agricultural policy strategic plans in the programming exercise for 2021-2027. By mid-2023 we will take stock of how they have been programmed for this new period, and in early 2024 we will issue a report on enhanced support to rural areas in the future based on the implementation of the European Union Rural Action Plan. Over the last year and a half we have made significant progress on the 30 actions in the plan. These cover many aspects highlighted in your report. We will propose a set of indicators to follow up the plan and envision implementation by mid-2023. Then we will also take stock of what actions have been carried out and programmed, as I already mentioned.

On rural proofing, we started to pilot our rural proofing mechanism with some promising results. I give you the example of the European Care Strategy and the new urban mobility framework. We are also on track to deliver the first products of the toolkit for European Union funds for rural areas. This tool will inspire local authorities and stakeholders to make use of the European Union funding and capacity building opportunities. We also welcome your support for the EU Rural Observatory, which went live on 8 December. This is a major milestone. I want to mention the rural package because European Parliament is a key partner in this process.

Indeed, our shared goals of the vision can only be achieved together. You call on the Commission to maintain a direct and structured dialogue with the various levels of governance. This is the very objective of the Rural Pact and it has the ambition to gather all actors playing a role for the rural areas. Since last year, 1200 people have joined the rural pact community and close to 80 have submitted commitments to act.

To conclude, I look forward to the exchange this evening and to the plenary vote on the report that Member of Parliament Isabel Carvalhais has championed and to continuing the fruitful collaboration with the honourable Members of this House on making the rural vision a reality, leaving no one and nowhere behind.

Franc Bogovič, *v imenu skupine PPE.* – Gospa predsedujoča, spoštovana komisarka, cenjena poročevalka, veseli me, da lahko obravnavamo dolgoročno vizijo razvoja podeželja.

Vizijo, s katero pravzaprav zaokrožujemo cilje, ki smo jih vse od leta 2016 že zapisali tudi v koncept pametnih vasi, se pravi rešiti problem depopulacije, na eni strani odhajanja mladih s podeželja, po drugi strani staranja ljudi.

Prav tako pa zagotoviti vso potrebno infrastrukturo, vključno s širokopasovnimi povezavami, ki so se pokazale predvsem v covidu kot neobhodne tudi na podeželju, da bo podeželje omogočilo možnosti za nova delovna mesta, hkrati pa tudi za kvalitetno življenje.

Kmetijstvo je osnovna dejavnost. Tudi tu so potrebni novi prijemi v okviru preciznega kmetijstva. Kmetijstvo je pokazalo, da je odporno tudi v času covida.

Po drugi strani pa kmetijstvu je treba dodati tudi turizem, energetski sektor, skrb za starejše, e-zdravje na podeželju in na takšen način bomo storili to, kar želimo – okrepiti podeželje.

Zato moramo zagotoviti financiranje iz različnih virov. Skrbeti morajo za to vse ravni, od lokalne do evropske. Vsekakor pa mora to v bodoče postati skupna politika, kajti brez politike razvoja podeželja bo podeželje trpelo podobne težave, kot je v preteklosti. Razvoj podeželja mora postati javna politika.

Clara Aguilera, *en nombre del Grupo S&D*. – Señora presidenta, quiero, en primer lugar, felicitar a mi colega Isabel Carvalhais y a todos los ponentes alternativos por el magnífico trabajo que han realizado. La prueba es que no hay ni una sola enmienda, porque se ha realizado un gran esfuerzo y trabajo. Felicidades, Isabel.

Ahora necesitamos compromisos. Están los acuerdos, está este informe brillante y, ahora, necesitamos compromisos. Necesitamos un compromiso firme por parte de la Unión Europea para frenar la brecha generacional, la brecha digital y la brecha de género que se dan en las zonas rurales europeas.

Señorías, el 83 % del territorio solo está ocupado por el 30 % de la población. A pesar de que llevamos más de tres décadas haciendo políticas de desarrollo de las zonas rurales, estas no han tenido el resultado esperado. Por tanto, a pesar de esos más de treinta años, hay que tomar nuevas medidas y hay que adoptar un enfoque global sobre las políticas a nivel de la Unión Europea.

También han disminuido las explotaciones agrarias en un 35 % en las últimas dos décadas, y eso ha tenido también su incidencia. Hay un creciente descontento en la población de las zonas rurales por la política. Porque no se toma en serio esta política. Se hace, a veces, con una visión demasiado sectorial, desde la agricultura. Las zonas rurales necesitan una visión integral y horizontal, no sectorial.

Y, por tanto, mientras esto no lo tengamos claro, no abordaremos lo que necesitan estas zonas rurales: igualdad de acceso a servicios y garantía de las condiciones de vida. La gente quiere elegir donde vive, pero con las mismas condiciones en las zonas urbanas o en las zonas rurales.

También quiero felicitar a los grupos que han participado en la iniciativa LEADER, que han hecho un magnífico trabajo en estos treinta años. Señora comisaria, toca pasar a la acción. Sumemos todos y hagamos una política integral para evitar esta despoblación rural.

Jérémy Decerle, *au nom du groupe Renew*. – Madame la Présidente, Madame la Commissaire, loin des affaires qui secouent fortement notre Parlement, les zones rurales représentent plus de 80 % des territoires européens. Des territoires qui se sentent souvent, à tort ou à raison, un peu oubliés.

Avec ce rapport, je suis fier que le Parlement leur adresse un message sérieux, complet, éclairé et bien travaillé. J'espère surtout que la Commission nous entendra et qu'elle transformera l'essai de sa communication de juin 2021. J'espère que nous avancerons sur l'observatoire et la définition des zones rurales fonctionnelles, que nous appliquerons le principe du «réflexe ruralité» à l'ensemble des politiques européennes et que nous rendrons nos fonds et nos accompagnements financiers plus efficaces.

Nous avons besoin de redonner de la visibilité à nos campagnes, de les rendre plus attrayantes et d'enrayer la chute démographique – dans le domaine de l'agriculture, bien sûr, mais aussi au-delà. Il y a d'ailleurs des signaux encourageants dans certaines régions européennes, que nous pourrions multiplier en collaborant davantage avec les acteurs de terrain.

Bruxelles ne construira pas seule l'avenir des zones rurales. Nous devons soigner et accompagner de façon complète et adaptée ces zones qui jouent tant de rôles, à commencer par celui de fournir la quasi-totalité de notre alimentation.

J'espère que les États membres, mais aussi les régions, pourront continuer à agir, à se coordonner et à mettre en œuvre leurs programmes respectifs: c'est là un grand enjeu pour l'équilibre de notre Europe. Merci encore à notre rapporteure, Isabel Carvalhais. Je pense qu'il faut approuver ce texte dans son intégralité, y compris, donc, le paragraphe sur les prédateurs.

Thomas Waitz, *on behalf of the Verts/ALE Group*. – Madam President, Commissioner, indeed, we have to face reality. We have rural areas where families leave the rural areas because there's a lack of public transport, there's a lack of internet connectivity to work from home, there's a lack of kindergartens, there's a lack of schools, there's a lack of retailers. And we see less and less public officers or police stations.

There are more and more farmers actually closing their businesses: hundreds every day. And it's mainly small and medium-sized farmers – the ones that mainly produce ecological, viable food – who mainly drive a kind of agriculture that fits with biodiversity and climate. These farmers are leaving rural areas in big numbers and they are the ones providing us with the daily food that we need.

So clearly we don't need just a vision or a plan or a long-term vision. We need concrete action so as not to treat citizens in rural areas as second-class citizens in our European Union.

But I call on my conservative colleagues again: we stand together in this report and we stand together in these claims. But once again you have inserted your shoot-the-wolf paragraph, or reduce the, yes, protection status. And with this once again, like last time when we had the six-party agreement, you are doing your best to split the majority here in Parliament. And you know that an INI report will only be powerful if it's shared by a big majority here. So please withdraw that article so we can all stand together, because the wolf clearly is not responsible for the failures of many of your colleagues in the last decades when it comes to rural areas. So let's fix that and let's have a big majority in favour of this wonderful report, thanks to Madam Carvalhais.

Elena Lizzi, *a nome del gruppo ID*. –Signora Presidente, signora Commissaria, onorevoli colleghi, ringrazio la relatrice Carvalhais e tutti i colleghi per i compromessi raggiunti, nonostante le nostre proposte non siano state incluse.

Le aree rurali rappresentano sicuramente una grande opportunità, sia per i nostri giovani, che vogliono riscoprire il valore della terra, sia per coloro che devono inventarsi o reinventarsi, giocoforza, una nuova vita, e di conseguenza un nuovo lavoro, a causa degli eventi che in questi ultimi anni ci hanno investito.

La ricerca di lavoro e l'opportunità di creare un substrato economico nelle aree limitrofe dei nostri paesi devono essere ai primi posti degli obiettivi politici. Le zone rurali nell'Unione europea ospitano circa il 30 % della popolazione, eppure coprono circa l'80 % della superficie complessiva dell'Unione europea.

Data la grandezza in termini di superficie, esse devono essere valorizzate e si devono implementare politiche che attraggano le persone, garantendo ad esse gli stessi servizi e le stesse occasioni delle aree urbane che sono al momento, dal punto di vista professionale, più attrattive.

Per questo bisogna puntare anche su innovazione e ricerca per rendere queste aree più accoglienti, anche con l'aiuto prezioso delle università e degli enti locali che più di tutti hanno il polso della vita reale in queste zone.

Come Lega e come gruppo ID sosteniamo tutti gli sforzi messi in atto per difendere le regioni rurali italiane ed europee, ma dobbiamo garantire che queste popolazioni, e soprattutto i nostri agricoltori, siano protetti anche dalle nuove insidie, come i grandi carnivori ad esempio.

Chi vuole creare un'impresa deve aver garantito il diritto di salvaguardarla. Per questo motivo riteniamo che ci voglia una maggiore presa di posizione, poiché i grandi carnivori hanno un impatto sulla redditività dell'agricoltura, in particolare in terreni agricoli a gestione estensiva, e crediamo che sia necessario garantire una coesistenza equilibrata tra gli esseri umani e questi predatori delle zone rurali.

Nel complesso riteniamo che il testo sia abbastanza equilibrato, ma avremmo voluto ottenere di più, non ci avete ascoltato. Avete sbagliato e non solo in questa occasione.

Zbigniew Kuźmiuk, *w imieniu grupy ECR*. – Pani Przewodnicząca! Pani Komisarz! Na początku chciałbym podziękować pani sprawozdawczyni i kolegom kontrsprawozdawcom za znakomitą współpracę w duchu kompromisu i podobnie rozumianych interesów wsi i obszarów wiejskich. To dlatego to sprawozdanie nie ma poprawek i w całości zostanie dużą większością pewnie przyjęte na tej sali. Dla mnie jako reprezentanta grupy ECR priorytetem było podkreślenie w strategii, że podstawową rolą obszarów wiejskich jest gospodarka rolna ukierunkowana na produkcję żywności oraz że produkcja ta musi być opłacalna dla rolników i zapewniać godny byt im i ich rodzinom. Na nic zdadzą się jakiekolwiek strategie, jeżeli praca na roli nie będzie atrakcyjna pod względem ekonomicznym, szczególnie dla młodego pokolenia, które dzisiaj ucieka ze wsi do miasta, szukając tam dla siebie lepszego życia.

Nasze sprawozdanie zresztą dobrze diagnozuje tę sytuację, podkreślając, że w ciągu dziesięciu ostatnich lat w Europie zniknęło 3 miliony gospodarstw. Ten proces niestety trwa, choć teraz już z mniejszą intensywnością. Na uwagę zasługuje również fakt, że rozwój terenów wiejskich, a szczególnie budowa infrastruktury społecznej i technicznej, powinna być finansowana z Funduszu Spójności. Do tej pory tak nie było. Rzeczywiście te z trudem wyrwane, można powiedzieć, pieniądze na Wspólną Politykę Rolną, szczególnie z drugiego filaru, były przeznaczane bardzo często na infrastrukturę, a powinny być przeznaczane na wsparcie gospodarstw, na ich modernizację, na zwiększanie produkcji rolnej. Ponieważ zarówno komunikat Komisji, jak i prace nad sprawozdaniem w dużej mierze były prowadzone jeszcze przed wybuchem wojny, to dopiero ta wojna w Ukrainie i prowadzenie przez Rosję wojny hybrydowej pokazało, jak bardzo ważne jest bezpieczeństwo żywnościowe.

W związku z tym chciałbym podziękować panu komisarzowi Wojciechowskiemu za pilne działania, które rzeczywiście to bezpieczeństwo żywnościowe wzmacniają, między innymi za zawieszenie odłogowania gruntów czy też sprzeciw wobec propozycji redukcji zużycia pestycydów o 50% dla wszystkich państw członkowskich, co jest przecież rozwiązaniem pozbawionym sensu.

Eugenia Rodríguez Palop, *en nombre del Grupo The Left*. – Señora presidenta, señora comisaria, en Europa hay 137 millones de personas viviendo en zonas rurales, el 30 % de nuestra población. Gracias a esa gente comemos, bebemos y respiramos. Todos nosotros nos sostenemos sobre sus hombros. Sin ellos no hay soberanía alimentaria, ni autonomía energética, ni lucha contra el cambio climático. Sin ellos no hay nada. Da igual lo que programemos aquí.

Sin embargo, la brecha territorial que sufren es tremenda: carencia de servicios públicos, desde saneamiento hasta colegios o centros de salud; brecha digital; brecha de género; falta de movilidad; malas condiciones de trabajo y falta de ingresos. Todo lo que ellos producen lo pagan finalmente más caro. A eso hay que sumar los retos que vienen afrontando ya desde hace décadas: desertificación, despoblación y megaproyectos que acaparan tierras, chupan recursos y generan residuos.

Yo soy de Llerena, un pueblo al sur de Badajoz, en España. Un lugar pequeño en el que se pelea a diario por mantener abierto un hospital comarcal. Hay otros pueblos similares que se levantan contra gigantes vertederos, minas a cielo abierto, megaparques solares en tierras fértiles o desecación de sus pantanos. A eso le llaman inversión. Soportamos en pie los continuos delirios de grandeza que se gestan en grandes urbes y en despachos como estos.

Delirios ecocidas, homicidas y suicidas. Porque es irracional, además de injusto, despreciar a quienes pisan la tierra, cultivan lo que comemos, mantienen nuestros acuíferos y cuidan nuestras raíces. Ya es hora de reconocer al campo lo que hace por nosotros, de ponerlo en valor y pagarlo. Deberíamos darle las gracias sólo por existir, por ser, por estar y, sobre todo, por resistir. De su supervivencia depende la nuestra. Hoy hemos dado un paso.

Dino Giarrusso (NI). – Signora Presidente, onorevoli colleghi, le aree rurali costituiscono un aspetto essenziale dello stile di vita europeo e sono fondamentali per il funzionamento economico, sociale e ambientale della nostra società. Ospitano ben 137 milioni di persone.

Nonostante i loro punti di forza le zone rurali, in particolare quelle remote e meno sviluppate e ve ne sono tante in Sicilia e in Sardegna, si trovano ad affrontare sfide significative e difficili da vincere se non verranno adeguatamente supportate.

Per questo il Green Deal europeo deve aprire nuove opportunità, in particolare per quel che riguarda la transizione verso un'economia a basse emissioni di carbonio.

Valorizziamo queste aree così importanti nell'assicurare la nostra produzione e la nostra autonomia alimentare, salvaguardando le nostre risorse naturali, i nostri paesaggi e la nostra biodiversità, nonché il nostro patrimonio culturale.

Bene dunque che vi sia un piano d'azione rurale, ma attenzione a non lasciarlo isolato come un totem. Al contrario, lo sviluppo delle aree rurali va armonizzato a quello delle aree urbane, per le quali è indispensabile.

Herbert Dorfmann (PPE). – Frau Präsidentin, Frau Kommissarin, Kolleginnen und Kollegen! Ländliche Räume sind Lebensräume für Menschen. Und diese Menschen, die dort leben, haben jedes Recht auf Lebensqualität, die zwar anders sein mag als in den Städten, aber eben nicht schlechter sein darf. Menschen in ländlichen Räumen haben Recht auf Gesundheitsversorgung, sie haben Recht auf sichere Straßen, auf öffentlichen Verkehr, auf schnelles Internet, auf Kinderhorte, Schulen, auf Altersheime und vieles mehr.

Menschen in ländlichen Räumen haben auch das Recht und wahrscheinlich auch die Pflicht, Wirtschaft zu betreiben. Nur wenn Bäuerinnen und Bauern und KMU im ländlichen Raum da sind, dann gibt es dort auch Arbeitsplätze. Und ohne Arbeitsplätze gibt es keine Familien im ländlichen Raum. Deshalb muss es aufhören, dass Menschen aus Städten tagtäglich den Menschen im ländlichen Raum sagen, was sie tun und was sie eben nicht tun dürfen. Ländliche Räume brauchen keine von anderen beschlossene Käseglocken, unter denen oft jede unternehmerische Idee erstickt.

Gut auch, dass wir in Zusammenhang mit diesem Bericht die Situation mit den großen Beutegreifern ansprechen. Viele huldigen einer vollkommen falsch verstandenen Idee von Biodiversität und akzeptieren oder begrüßen sogar, dass Wölfe und Bären durch unsere Dörfer spazieren und dort Nutztiere reißen. Wir brauchen auch hier Antworten. Wenn der Text morgen so verabschiedet wird, wie wir ihn im Ausschuss vorbereitet haben, dann ist das eine Antwort. Ländliche Räume bleiben mit vital, wenn Menschen bereit sind und die Chance haben, sie zu gestalten. Hoffentlich ist dieser Bericht ein guter Schritt dorthin.

Paolo De Castro (S&D). – Signora Presidente, signor Commissario, onorevoli colleghi, le nostre aree rurali sono custodi di tradizioni, sono custodi di cultura e capacità e rappresentano uno dei nuclei fondanti della società europea.

Per questo, come ha ben sottolineato la relatrice Carvalhais, che voglio ringraziare per l'ottimo lavoro svolto, accogliamo con favore gli impegni assunti dalla Commissione nella visione a lungo termine delle aree rurali.

Tuttavia, perché questi impegni si traducano in azioni concrete, serve un cambio di passo nelle politiche dell'Unione per lo sviluppo dei territori interni, accompagnato da un maggior supporto per un'agricoltura sempre più sostenibile sul piano sociale, ambientale ed economico.

In questo senso stiamo lavorando per potenziare tutti gli strumenti, quali le indicazioni geografiche, fondamentali per lo sviluppo e la tenuta sociale del nostro territorio rurale.

Al contempo ci opporremo a quelle misure, come la direttiva sulle emissioni, che mettono a repentaglio la zootecnia, nonostante questa coinvolga pascoli di elevato valore ambientale e razze a rischio di estinzione, garantendo reddito e vitalità proprio nelle zone remote e montuose.

Serve, caro Commissario, un maggior coordinamento tra politiche di coesione, politica agricola comune, NextGenerationEU e tutti gli strumenti necessari a trasformare la strategia per le nostre aree rurali in un successo per lo sviluppo rurale, con territori più prosperi, resilienti e integrati.

Montag, 12. Dezember 2022

PRESIDENZA DELL'ON. PINA PICIERNO

Vicepresidente

Mauri Pekkarinen (Renew). – Arvoisa puhemies, menestyäkseen EU:n maaseudun on kyettävä tarjoamaan työtä, palveluja ja toimiva infrastruktuuri. Esittelijä on käsitellyt ansiokkaasti näitä asioita. Modernin maaseudun ehto on, että se on kytketty kiinteillä laajakaistayhteyksillä digitaalisiin palveluverkkoihin. EU:n tilintarkastustuomioistuimen kertomus muutaman vuoden takaa osoittaa, että tämä ehto ei täyty läheskään koko EU:n alueella. Tämä pitää paikkansa myös omassa kotimaassani Suomessa. Alueilla, joilla laajakaistayhteydet eivät toimi kunnolla, ei EU:n yhteiselle koheesiopolitiikalle ole todellisia edellytyksiä. EU:n tulisikin edellyttää, että koheesiorahoituksen myöntämisen ehto alueelle on se, että jäsenvaltiot huolehtivat toimivat laajakaistayhteydet maaseudulle. Ilman niitä ei koheesiopolitiikalta voida odottaa kunnollisia tuloksia.

Maaseudun kehittämisen rahoitus saadaan yhteisen maatalouspolitiikan kakkospilarista, toisin sanoen Euroopan maaseudun kehittämisen maatalousrahastosta. Rahoituksen siirtäminen koheesiovarojen tai aluekehityksen säännösten puolelle ei olisi järkevää eikä kustannustehokasta. Pelkona on myös, että raha ohjautuisi muihin kuin maaseudun kehittämisen hankkeisiin koheesiopuolelle.

Gilles Lebreton (ID). – Madame la Présidente, chers collègues, le rapport qui nous est présenté aujourd'hui dresse un juste constat: les zones rurales connaissent un déclin préoccupant; elles sont désertées par les services publics et délaissées par les jeunes générations. Symptôme de cette désaffection, la disparition attendue de 62 % des exploitations agricoles d'ici 2040 est dramatique, car elle est une menace directe pour notre autonomie alimentaire. Les solutions qui nous sont proposées témoignent d'une vision malheureusement idéologique du problème.

Le rapport souhaite développer de nouvelles sources de revenus pour les zones rurales, parmi lesquelles la production d'énergies renouvelables. J'estime qu'il nous appartient de protéger la richesse inégalable que constitue notre patrimoine agricole avant de nous disperser dans des politiques énergétiques hasardeuses.

Il cherche ensuite à faire plier les campagnes sous les assauts du pacte vert pour l'Europe et de sa stratégie «De la ferme à la fourchette». Je conteste cet objectif de décroissance agricole, car il nous conduit dans une impasse économique et environnementale.

Il répond enfin à la désertification démographique par la protection des droits des migrants dans les campagnes. J'estime qu'il est impératif de protéger d'abord les droits des agriculteurs européens, victimes de la politique commerciale néfaste de Bruxelles.

Comble du cynisme: voici que la Commission nous annonce le doublement des importations de poulets du Chili, lesquelles s'ajouteront aux concessions en cours de négociation avec le Mexique et le Mercosur. L'agriculture n'est plus une variable d'ajustement des politiques européennes; elle en est carrément devenue le martyr.

La redynamisation des zones rurales ne passera pas par un énième organe européen de contrôle, qui décidera à la place des États membres, et encore moins par une intensification de la politique libre-échangiste de Bruxelles. La solution est avant tout agricole. Ne perdons pas de vue le vrai sujet: faire confiance à nos agriculteurs pour relever les défis qui nous attendent et leur assurer enfin un revenu décent.

Bert-Jan Ruissen (ECR). – Voorzitter, commissaris, collega's, we spreken vandaag over het belang van een sterk en veerkrachtig landelijk gebied. Een langetermijnperspectief voor de boeren is broodnodig. Het verslag legt daarbij de vinger bij een zorgwekkende ontwikkeling, namelijk de groeiende kloof tussen stad en platteland.

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Ik zie echter nog een andere kloof, namelijk de kloof tussen beleidsmakers en boeren. Overheidsbeleid dat soms mijlenver afstaat van de realiteit. Een duidelijke uiting daarvan zagen we in mijn eigen land, in Nederland, met massale boerendemonstraties en omgekeerde vlaggen. Het beleid van de Nederlandse overheid zet de toekomst van duizenden boerenbedrijven op losse schroeven, met alle gevolgen van dien, ook voor de leefbaarheid op het platteland.

Hoe lossen we dit op? Richting de toekomst zie ik veel in het voorstel van de rapporteur om nieuwe regels te onderwerpen aan een plattelandstoets. Dat kan nieuwe crisissituaties als gevolg van ondoordacht beleid voorkomen. Rond de stikstofcrisis in Nederland zie ik maar één oplossing: terugkomen op verkeerde beleidskeuzes uit het verleden en samen met boeren zoeken naar oplossingen.

Wat nodig is, is een langetermijnperspectief en zekerheid. Zekerheid dat het boerenbedrijf, dat vaak van generatie op generatie is doorgegeven, kan blijven bestaan. Zekerheid om investeringen te kunnen doen die nodig zijn voor een duurzame toekomst. Want één ding is zeker: zolang er boeren zijn, is er voedsel en is er ook leven op het platteland. Laten we er tijdig de waarde van inzien.

Norbert Lins (PPE). – Frau Präsidentin, Frau Kommissarin, Kolleginnen und Kollegen! Stronger, connected, resilient, prosperous: Das sind die Schlagworte der Kommission auf ihrer am Freitag veröffentlichten neuen Internetseite zum Thema „Ländliche Räume".

Es freut mich, dass die Kommission diese Herausforderungen erkannt hat. Für mich ist entscheidend bei dieser Diskussion, welchen Platz in der Gesellschaft und welche Akzeptanz die ländlichen Räume haben. Es darf hier keine Klassengesellschaften geben. Die ländlichen Räume müssen unterstützt werden, sie müssen Schritt halten können vor dem Hintergrund des Klimawandels, der sozialen und wirtschaftlichen Herausforderungen. Die wichtigsten Themen müssen angesprochen werden. Es geht um Verkehrsplanung, Mobilität, Schule, Bildung, Demografie, Daseinsvorsorge, Breitbandausbau, gesellschaftlichen Zusammenhalt und bürgerliches Engagement.

Und deswegen danke ich der Kollegin Carvalhais für den sehr guten Bericht – insbesondere auch dafür, dass das Thema Beutegreifer aufgegriffen worden ist. Auch das ist ein wichtiger Teil, dass die ländlichen Räume geschützt sind und dass im ländlichen Raum gewirtschaftet werden kann. Auch das gehört zur Akzeptanz und zum Leben in den ländlichen Räumen dazu.

Carmen Avram (S&D). – Doamna președintă, această dezbatere nu este despre sate izolate, probleme ale fermierilor și o viziune romantică privind viața la țară. Această dezbatere este despre 30 % din populația Uniunii Europene, peste 80 % din teritoriul său și o problemă urgentă de care depinde viitorul statelor membre.

De exemplu, în țara mea, 45 % din populație trăiește la sat, cea mai mare pondere din Uniunea Europeană. Dar situația, atât în România, cât și în restul Uniunii, e dramatică. Programele de finanțare actuale sunt bune pe hârtie, însă inutile pe teren. De aceea avem statistici recente care arată că peste jumătate din cetățenii europeni din rural se consideră ignorați de Bruxelles. De aceea avem un exod continuu de la sat la oraș. De aceea, cei care încă mai sunt acolo nu văd decât două soluții: fie părăsirea completă a satelor noastre, fie îndepărtarea de valorile europene.

În vremuri de crize multiple, de asalt asupra Europei și de schimbări geopolitice cu final impredictibil, pur și simplu nu ne putem permite să aruncăm în uitare aproape o treime din cetățenii europeni, și mai ales pe acei oameni care ne asigură hrana și ne păstrează tradițiile și mediul înconjurător.

Raportul colegei mele, Isabel Carvalhais, pe care o felicit, vine cu măsuri bune și concrete: fonduri suplimentare pentru infrastructura rutieră, spitale, școli și conexiune la internet de mare viteză, eliminarea birocrației și o mai mare implicare a autorităților locale, bani pentru atragerea tinerilor în zona rurală. Toate acestea, puse în practică și finanțate din viitorul buget multianual al Uniunii Europene. Asta trebuie să facem dacă mai vrem să avem o zonă rurală și după 2027.

Irène Tolleret (Renew). – Madame la Présidente, Madame la Commissaire, chers collègues, merci et tout d'abord, félicitations à Isabel Carvalhais et à l'ensemble des rapporteurs fictifs pour la qualité de ce rapport. J'ai la ruralité heureuse et j'ai la ruralité conquérante, car je crois que les zones rurales sont l'endroit où nous avons les solutions pour le pacte vert pour l'Europe, entre autres grâce à la transition numérique et à la vision à long terme pour les zones rurales, qui nous permet d'avoir la feuille de route pour construire une Europe rurale plus forte, mieux connectée et plus résiliente.

L'Europe rurale est aussi le milieu où des initiatives vertueuses comme le programme Leader se développent. C'est grâce à ce programme que nous réalisons l'Europe de la proximité et l'Europe des citoyens engagée. La ruralité y est le milieu de l'innovation sociale: les différents acteurs se rassemblent, les nouvelles idées sont stimulées et les nouveaux partenariats sont créés, avec une méthode participative qui engage la population locale. La nature participative de Leader et ses résultats brillants ont été à la base de ce nouvel élan pour la ruralité.

Il est donc indispensable de renforcer le programme Leader, d'assurer que les zones rurales reçoivent un pourcentage adéquat de fonds européens, étant donné qu'elles représentent 80 % du territoire de l'Union, et de développer un réflexe rural qui amène les décideurs politiques comme nous à intégrer la dimension rurale de manière transversale dans toutes les politiques publiques européennes et nationales.

Mathilde Androuët (ID). – Madame la Présidente, depuis des décennies, l'Union européenne s'efforce d'instaurer et de promouvoir le libre-échange et la mondialisation. Pour cela, elle a multiplié les traités de libre-échange, qui n'ont eu de cesse d'appauvrir notre agriculture et de dépecer notre industrie. L'appauvrissement de nos campagnes, qui ont été délaissées au profit de la «start-up nation», selon les mots de notre président français, en est la conséquence directe. Sur le marché mondial, les produits agricoles et industriels français ou européens ne sont plus compétitifs.

C'est pourquoi nos campagnes ont été délaissées au profit de grandes métropoles. Les constats sont là: désertification des zones rurales, démographie catastrophique, fermeture des services publics et persistance de zones blanches. Or, ce sont des réalités largement imputables à la politique de l'Union européenne. Et que propose-t-elle pour y remédier? Un pacte rural, un test rural et un observatoire européen de la ruralité. Mais quels sont ces termes? Les ruraux européens ne sont pas des rats de laboratoire devant subir des tests et autres observations. Par ailleurs, la PAC et le Feader existent pour cela. J'en déduis donc qu'ils ne fonctionnent pas, puisque la Commission propose un nouveau pacte.

De plus, à l'heure où M. Macron envisage d'installer des populations entières de migrants dans nos campagnes si délaissées, la Commission pense sérieusement à faire reposer sa politique sur, je cite, «des communautés inclusives de solidarité intergénérationnelle, d'équité et de renouveau, ouvertes aux nouveaux arrivants et favorisant l'égalité des chances pour tous». Ce sont des chimères.

Pour développer une saine vision des zones rurales, l'Union européenne devrait questionner l'ultralibéralisme et le mondialisme qui la caractérisent, au profit du protectionnisme intelligent et de la relocalisation des activités en ruralité.

Ladislav Ilčić (ECR). – Poštovana predsjedavajuća, poštovane dame i gospodo, podržavam ovo izvješće jer ide u dobrom smjeru. Naime, u Europskoj uniji na jednog poljoprivrednika mlađeg od 40 godina imamo tri starija od šezdeset i pet godina. Dakle, selo izumire. Između 2003. i 2016. broj poljoprivrednih gospodarstava smanjio se za 32%.

No, kad je selo dobro prometno povezano i infrastrukturalno opremljeno i kad ljudi mogu dobro živjeti od poljoprivrede ili drugog rada, tada je život na selu vrlo lijep, a stambeni prostor je značajno jeftiniji, što je izrazito važno za obitelji i demografiju. Zato moramo biti odlučniji i učinkovitiji u donošenju politika koje jačaju ruralni razvoj i domaću poljoprivrednu proizvodnju, a ne poticati uvoz lošije hrane upitnog podrijetla i punjenje džepova prekupaca i velikih korporacija. Bez prosperitetnog sela nema ni uspješnog grada. Nema zdrave, domaće hrane, nema uspješne države.

Daniel Buda (PPE). – Doamna președintă, aș dori în primul rând să felicit raportoarea pentru munca depusă și stimați colegi, cu toții suntem conștienți de importanța zonelor rurale, indiferent dacă vorbim de securitatea alimentară, de combaterea schimbărilor climatice ori de turism.

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Cu toate acestea, politicile europene nu au reușit să dezvolte aceste zone, astfel încât astăzi doar 11 % din exploatațiile agricole din Uniunea Europeană sunt conduse de fermieri sub 40 de ani.

Investițiile în internetul cu bandă largă, în serviciile de alimentare cu apă, conectivitate rutieră, asistență medicală și educație sunt indispensabile. Doamna comisară, trebuie să fim conștienți de faptul că doar atunci când decalajul dintre urban și rural va fi eliminat, vom putea vorbi cu adevărat despre inversarea tendințelor demografice.

Sinergia fondurilor și consolidarea programului LEADER trebuie să fie dublate de reducerea birocrației în procesul de accesare a fondurilor europene.

Războiul din Ucraina ne-a demonstrat încă o dată importanța de a păstra capacitatea zonelor rurale de a furniza alimente de calitate și la prețuri accesibile.

Tocmai de aceea vreau să subliniez necesitatea ca politicile Comisiei Europene să fie ancorate în noile realități geopolitice.

Marcos Ros Sempere (S&D). – Señora presidenta, ¿cuál es el valor de una cultura? Las zonas rurales de la Unión Europea abarcan más del 80 % del territorio, pero acogen apenas a un tercio de sus habitantes. Miles de pueblos con diversas tradiciones y diversas formas de vida están en riesgo de desaparecer por despoblación.

Las instituciones europeas debemos garantizar su supervivencia. La política de cohesión de la Unión Europea debe impulsar el desarrollo de estas zonas. Los nuevos planes de movilidad tienen que acabar con el aislamiento de nuestros pueblos, aislamiento que, en ocasiones, está provocado por la falta de infraestructuras. Debemos garantizar una conectividad que posibilite el teletrabajo y debemos trabajar para implementar el Pacto Rural.

Pero también podemos utilizar el potencial de la política de cohesión para fijar población al territorio. Podemos ofrecer incentivos a las personas que decidan vivir en el mundo rural; impulsar un turismo sostenible que dé a conocer sus formas de vida; poner en valor un modo de vida sostenible que es respetuoso con nuestro planeta. No podemos permitir que tradiciones centenarias de nuestros pueblos rurales en toda Europa, que están en riesgo de despoblación, se pierdan por la inacción de las instituciones.

Tenemos que implicarnos. Necesitamos implicación a todos los niveles. Y la Unión Europea debe liderar esta implicación, porque el valor de una cultura es incalculable.

Martin Hojsík (Renew). – Vážená pani predsedajúca, strašenie vlkmi či medveďmi patrí do rozprávok, ako je tá o červenej čiapočke, alebo do krajín, kde sa piesok lial a voda sypala. Nie do 21. storočia. Zabíjanie zvierat dostalo mnohé druhy v Európe na pokraj vyhynutia. Medvede, vlky, rysy, zubry, bobry a mnohé ďalšie. Náš prístup k prírode bol dobyvateľský. Zotročiť, zoťať, zabiť. Tento prístup nás priviedol na pokraj masového vymierania druhov. Budeme medzi nimi aj my? Vidiek potrebuje progres, kvalitné školstvo, zdravotníctvo, dostupné dopravné spojenia, vysokorýchlostný internet, ale nie podrobovanie si prírody. Verím, že v treťom miléniu nepotrebujeme znova zabíjať dravce. Nemusíme si dokazovať prevahu a pokorovať iné formy života. Ak chceme prežiť, musíme sa naučiť spolu žiť, ako medzi ľuďmi, tak s inými formami života, napríklad s vlkmi a medveďmi. Aby naše deti nepoznali prírodu iba z rozprávok.

Denis Nesci (ECR). – Signora Presidente, onorevoli colleghi, ritengo sia fondamentale che l'Unione europea e gli Stati membri mettano al centro delle loro politiche interventi mirati, attraverso il coinvolgimento degli enti locali, a valorizzare i territori delle aree rurali.

Crisi demografica, spopolamento, mancanza di infrastrutture e servizi digitali sono alcune delle criticità che si trovano ad affrontare, ma al tempo stesso questi territori sono un potenziale per tutta l'Unione. Penso alle sfide attuali, quali la crisi energetica e la sicurezza alimentare, ma anche rispetto ai settori strategici che incidono sul loro sviluppo economico.

Le comunicazioni della Commissione del 2021 rappresentano due importanti iniziative, alle quali però occorre dar seguito. A partire dall'implementazione delle politiche già esistenti, con la necessità di progetti integrati e complementari basati sui programmi della politica di coesione del Fondo europeo agricolo per lo sviluppo rurale e sui piani strategici nazionali nell'ambito della PAC e degli investimenti previsti dai piani nazionali per la ripresa e la resilienza.

Così come è utile che le strategie a livello europeo lanciate nell'ambito del Green Deal abbiano un approccio realistico e non ideologico, che coniughi sostenibilità economica e sostenibilità ambientale.

Anne Sander (PPE). – Madame la Présidente, Madame la Commissaire, les zones rurales sont le cœur battant du territoire européen. Dans ma région, elles représentent 40 % de la population. Pourtant, ces territoires sont confrontés à des défis et à des difficultés majeurs, par exemple l'accès à des services, le développement des infrastructures, le renouvellement des générations ou encore l'accès à l'enseignement. Aujourd'hui encore, l'inflation, la précarité énergétique, le coût des carburants et le risque de délestage électrique pèsent plus fort encore sur nos zones rurales.

Ce sont pourtant elles qui pourront nous apporter une réponse aux défis majeurs auxquels nous devons faire face, que ce soit la sécurité alimentaire, l'indépendance énergétique ou, bien sûr, les enjeux environnementaux. Larges pourvoyeurs de richesses et d'emplois, les secteurs agricole et sylvicole doivent demeurer au centre de ces territoires.

Je voudrais saluer le mécanisme de test pour les zones rurales qui doit être mis en place, parce qu'en évaluant les nouvelles politiques et leurs effets sur ces zones rurales, nous éviterons, je l'espère, que ces dernières soient lésées par des politiques mises en place de manière négative. C'est un vrai enjeu pour l'ensemble de l'Europe.

Dacian Cioloș (Renew). – Doamna președintă, zonele rurale și-au dovedit reziliența atât în timpul pandemiei de COVID-19, cât și acum, de când Ucraina este atacată de Rusia, au dovedit că pot asigura aprovizionarea cu alimente, mai ales prin lanțuri scurte.

Cu toate acestea, zonele rurale continuă să aibă probleme structurale mari. E nevoie în continuare de investiții atât în infrastructura de bază, dar și în servicii publice, mai ales pentru educație și sănătate, pentru că e o problemă în continuare de coeziune, de diferență, de dezvoltare, chiar dacă nu atât de mult între Est și Vest cât era pe vremuri, dar din ce în ce mai mult între zonele urbane și zonele rurale, chiar în interiorul aceleiași regiuni.

De aceea e nevoie de investiții, mai ales pentru a atrage și a fixa tineri în mediul rural, atât în activitatea agricolă, dar și pentru dezvoltarea economică și socială în general. Și e important să investim în zonele rurale, pentru că pentru Uniunea Europeană sunt un element de identitate, aici sunt ancorate tradiții.

Dar sunt convins că zonele rurale pot fi și la originea modernizării societății europene, dacă investim suficient în aceste zone și fixăm tinerii în mediul rural.

Beata Mazurek (ECR). – Pani Przewodnicząca! Szanowni Państwo! Bardzo się cieszę, że nareszcie dyskutujemy w Parlamencie nad tematem systemowego podejścia do długoterminowej wizji rozwoju obszarów wiejskich. Tym bardziej mnie to cieszy, że jest ona zbieżna ze strategią zrównoważonego rozwoju wsi, rolnictwa i rybactwa, którą wdrażamy w moim kraju, w Polsce. Myślę, że wszyscy zgodzimy się ze stwierdzeniem, że rolnictwo stanowi sektor kluczowy, który zapewnia nam bezpieczeństwo żywnościowe. Pandemia oraz wojna postawiły przed europejskimi rolnikami wyzwania bez precedensu, lawinowy wzrost cen energii i nawozów, galopującą inflację i zablokowane szlaki eksportowe z Morza Czarnego.

Jak dotychczas nasi rolnicy wykazali się niezwykłą siłą i zaradnością. Jednak konieczne są dalsze działania instytucjonalne w celu niwelowania wciąż utrzymujących się różnic poziomu życia między wsią i miastem, działań wyrównujących szanse, zwłaszcza w obszarze edukacji i dostępu do usług publicznych, dzięki którym obszary wiejskie będą mogły w pełni wykorzystać swój potencjał. A o to, tak naprawdę, wszystkim nam powinno chodzić.

Montag, 12. Dezember 2022

Simone Schmiedtbauer (PPE). – Frau Präsidentin, geschätzte Kommissarin, werte Kolleginnen und Kollegen! Wir brauchen eine starke Zukunftsvision für Europas ländliche Regionen, denn sie sind ein Schlüssel zur Lösung zahlreicher aktueller Herausforderungen und ein Gradmesser auf dem Weg zu einer nachhaltigeren europäischen Wirtschaft.

Außerdem sind die unzähligen ländlichen Gemeinden das Rückgrat unserer Gesellschaft – das vergessen leider sehr viele. Deshalb ist es mir ein Herzensanliegen, dass die Menschen in den Regionen stärker mit in die EU-Politik eingebunden werden. Europa kann doch nicht ohne sie gestaltet werden. Die Zukunft kann ganz einfach nicht ohne sie gestaltet werden. Mit der langfristigen Vision für den ländlichen Raum schaffen wir eine zukunftsweisende Basis dafür, dass auch die nächsten Generationen gut und vor allem gerne im ländlichen Raum leben können.

Europa braucht die Menschen in den Regionen ebenso wie unsere Land-, Forst- und Energiewirte. Denn sie sind es, die die EU-Gesetzesvorhaben auf dem Weg zu einem unabhängigeren und grüneren Europa auf ihrem Grund und Boden umsetzen und erst mit Leben erfüllen.

Europa braucht gestärkte Regionen mit guter Infrastruktur, attraktiven Bildungs- und wirtschaftlichen Entfaltungsmöglichkeiten. Die EU-Kommission muss künftig auf widersprüchliche Gesetzesinitiativen verzichten und stattdessen den ländlichen Raum wirtschaftlich, ökologisch und sozial stärken.

Атидже Алиева-Вели (Renew). – Г-жо Председател, г-жо Комисар, Европа несъмнено има нужда от тази визия. Погледнете тези снимки от България. Резултатът от дългосрочните инвестиции е видим, както и от липсата на такива. С гордост ще отбележа, че добрите примери са от селски общини с кметове от Движението за права и свободи. Селските райони продължават да имат много проблеми и предизвикателства. Те трябва да стават привлекателни за младите хора, трябва да бъдат успешни в зеления и дигитален преход. Нужно е и за в бъдеще адекватно европейско финансиране за инвестиции в инфраструктура, широколентов интернет, в качествени административни, образователни и социални и здравни услуги.

Безспорно в голяма степен жизнеността на селските райони се дължи на земеделието. Но за огромно съжаление земеделците в някои държави получават по-ниски плащания, включително и в България. Затова, приветствайки визията за развитие на селските райони до 2040 г., се надявам неравенствата да бъдат премахнати.

Presidente. – Ricordo all'onorevole Alieva-Veli che è contrario al regolamento del Parlamento mostrate immagini o oggetti in Aula.

Per la prossima volta, evitiamo di farlo.

Eugen Jurzyca (ECR). – Vážená pani predsedajúca, správa o vízii pre vidiecke oblasti Únie do roku 2040 ma nepotešila. Nenavrhuje ani vhodné riešenia a hlavne nemá správne identifikované príčiny, prečo vidiecke oblasti zaostávajú. Snaha umiestniť mladých ľudí do neproduktívnych zamestnaní na vidieku nemôže byť predsa súčasťou stratégie. Prečo ich chceme obetovať? Štúdia OECD nám dáva jasné odporúčania. Nestačí chudobným regiónom prerozdeľovať peniaze, potrebné sú štrukturálne zmeny. Neefektívne granty brzdia inovácie a rast produktivity. Pritom rozdiely v produktivite sú hlavným dôvodom zaostávania. Regiónom by sme mali dať autonómiu pri lokálnych daniach a podporovať fiškálnu decentralizáciu. Tieto riešenia v správe chýbajú a myslím si, že bez nich pokrok nedosiahneme.

Colm Markey (PPE). – Madam President, Commissioner, ladies and gentlemen, for too long rural areas have been left behind, with our best talent moving away for education and employment opportunities. For the first time we have a chance to turn this around. We can embrace a new generation of opportunities, whether it's remote working that can bring highly skilled people back into rural areas and let them rear a family and breathe life into rural communities, or tourism that can bring much-needed revenue into rural areas.

But most importantly, renewable energies can bring industry and employment and rebalance the economic driver back into our rural areas. But we must ensure that the revenue from these new opportunities remains in rural economies and drives the rural economies and is not exported out to other areas. We need to create the right environment. We need broadband. We need to reinvigorate our town centres to make them vibrant places for people to live. We need to create the educational opportunities for people in rural areas, the very same as there are available in urban areas.

We also have to acknowledge that agriculture has always been and remains a cornerstone of rural communities. It's the biggest multiplier in the rural economies. It's the heart of our food production system and is central to protecting our biodiversity and building a sustainable environment into the future.

Procedura «catch the eye»

Stanislav Polčák (PPE). – Paní předsedající, rozhodně nesmíme na venkov zapomenout dlouhodobě. V Evropském parlamentu se věnujeme regionům, městům a venkov jako by byl pomyslná Popelka. Ne, že bychom se mu nevěnovali, ale jako by kohezní politika a její výsledky nedosáhly na venkov. A to je velká škoda. Kohezní politika má samozřejmě snižovat rozdíly mezi regiony a musí primárně pomáhat zachovat venkov živý, venkov, který je skutečně plným místem pro zemědělce, pro získání také práce, plný mladých lidí.

A zatím to spíš vypadá, že města fungují jako magnet, který stahuje dovnitř k sobě práci, lidi, technologie, služby. Tudíž na co se musíme zaměřit, je na dostupnost infrastruktury a služeb na venkově. To je jednoznačné. Zadruhé oslabování kohezní obálky peněz, které jsou určené na podporu regionů, musí přestat. Musíme se zaměřit na podporu venkova i tím, že jim zachováme ten příděl, který má mít zajištěn.

Isabel García Muñoz (S&D). – Señora presidenta, felicidades a la ponente por su trabajo. Esta visión a largo plazo para las zonas rurales era tan esperada como necesaria y supone una oportunidad única para poner a las zonas rurales en el centro de la agenda europea.

El Pacto Verde y la pandemia han revelado el potencial que la Europa rural tiene para conseguir un nuevo modelo económico más sostenible, con producción de energía renovable, haciendo uso de la economía circular y la innovación, y desempeñando, por tanto, un papel activo en las transiciones ecológica y digital a las que aspira la Unión Europea.

Pero, para poder exprimir todo este potencial, hay que hacer frente a los desafíos que presentan, de modo que sirvan para retener y atraer población que quiera disfrutar de la calidad de vida en las zonas rurales. Hablamos de infraestructuras, de conectividad, de servicios de calidad y, por supuesto, de oportunidades de empleo. Oportunidades que van más allá de la agricultura. Nuevas formas de trabajo, nuevas tecnologías, que, además, deben involucrar a las mujeres y a los jóvenes y, así, frenar la despoblación.

Para ello es indispensable un pacto rural con el compromiso de todos e instrumentos como el mecanismo de verificación rural, para evaluar el impacto de las políticas europeas en las zonas rurales.

Billy Kelleher (Renew). – Madam President, I welcome the report. At the outset I think we have to look at rural Europe from a very different perspective. For far too long we have been looking at as a theme park for people to visit and to look at from time to time. They are real communities with real people and we now have to accept that we have to do an awful lot more to ensure that the vibrancy of these communities is maintained into the future.

Obviously, agriculture is a critical cornerstone in ensuring rural development and rural communities are sustained, but we have to look beyond that. We have to embrace the digital technologies that are out there now. We have to put in place the infrastructure to ensure that there are quality jobs in rural communities across Europe.

One issue that never ceases to amaze me is that we consistently talk about ensuring that young people stay in rural Ireland or in rural Europe, but at the same time, they simply can't provide houses in rural communities. They can't get planning permissions. They can't build sustainable environments. So we do need to look at the whole of rural communities across Europe to ensure that we have young people, quality jobs, but at the same time that they can actually build a home in those communities and reside there into the future. Otherwise, we will continue to lose young people to our cities, and rural communities will continue to degrade.

Michal Wiezik (Renew). – Vážená pani predsedajúca, žiaľ, máme to tu zas. Do plánov pre rozvoj vidieka sa dostala zmienka o potrebe zníženia ochrany vlka. Vraj máme byť konzistentní s predchádzajúcim pomerne nešťastným stanoviskom Parlamentu. Na stálom výbore pre Bernský dohovor 2. decembra 2022 všetkých 27 členských štátov jednohlasne odmietlo požiadavku Švajčiarska na zníženie ochrany vlka, čím jasne deklarovali potrebu jeho ďalšej prísnej ochrany v európskom priestore. Ak teda máme byť konzistentní, začnime tým, že budeme v zhode s pozíciou našich vlastných krajín. Démonizovanie vlka a žiadanie nesystémových a zjavne nefunkčných krokov jeho lovu vidieku nepomôže. Príroda nie je nepriateľom vidieka, naopak, je jeho spojencom v boji proti klimatickej zmene a poklese druhového bohatstva. Začnime preto s ňou, prosím, spolupracovať. Je zároveň nástrojom s najväčším potenciálom pre rozvoj

slabo rozvinutých a upadajúcich vidieckych oblastí.

Sandra Pereira (The Left). – Senhora Presidente, consideramos que este relatório faz um diagnóstico certeiro sobre a realidade do mundo rural em alguns Estados-Membros e que tem um foco forte na agricultura como atividade primordial nas áreas rurais. Acompanhamos muitas das preocupações expressas. Defendemos a valorização dos rendimentos dos pequenos e médios agricultores para a manutenção da atividade e valorização das áreas rurais, aspetos que a Política Agrícola Comum e as suas sucessivas reformas têm descurado com uma injusta distribuição das ajudas e com o favorecimento do agronegócio.

O relatório podia ter ido mais longe na defesa das funções sociais do Estado e dos serviços públicos de saúde, educação e de cuidados a crianças, idosos e pessoas com deficiência, com infraestruturas que cubram a totalidade dos territórios, dando respostas de alta qualidade e de proximidade. Se se repetirem as políticas de sempre, que se desviam do caminho da coesão, e se se insistir em vergar os povos aos sabores do grande capital, podemos até ter zonas rurais mais fortes, conectadas e prósperas, mas não será para benefício dos povos, mas sim dos bolsos de alguns.

Mick Wallace (The Left). – Madam President, the Commission's long-term vision for rural areas is welcome. Along with the cohesion policy, CAP will be the main driver of the vision. But the vision contains a central weakness: there is no binding requirement for Member States to integrate the objectives of the vision into their CAP strategic plans. Now, CAP, of course, is fundamentally flawed in the first place. It's a very unequal distribution system and it's biased in favour of big agri and intensive farms and feedlots at the expense of small farms and family farms. Europe has lost a third of its family farms between 2003 and 2013. It's a frightening statistic.

To help rural areas, we must stop industrial farm expansion by rebalancing the value chain for the benefit of farmers and by banning below-cost selling of food. Building a new vision for rural areas should start with a radical change in agricultural and trade policy, and that should start with the abandoning of the Mercosur agreement.

(Fine della procedura «catch the eye»)

Dubravka Šuica, *Vice-President of the Commission*. – Madam President, many thanks, dear Members, for this enriching discussion. I will use this opportunity of the closing remarks to refer to some of the key points that you mentioned and that I heard from your exchange.

First, in relation to the budget, one of the EU financing instruments helping the development of rural areas from an agricultural perspective is the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development. I see your proposals for earmarking part of the other dedicated instrument, the European Regional Development Fund, for rural areas. We will analyse it attentively, including from a coordination, synergy and complementarity point of view.

This also brings me to the toolkit on access to EU funds. Our ambition is that this tool will also capitalise on the experience and good examples of rural peers and reproduce successful stories.

We also share the emphasis you put on seizing the opportunity of a rural proofing mechanism to use fully and coherently all relevant policies, as well as your call to implement rural proofing at national, regional and local levels as well.

For the European Union Rural Observatory, which went live, as I already said, on 8 December, it is a major milestone to improve the visualisation and accessibility of the data we already have, and improve collection of more detailed territorial data and analysis that are still missing on the needs and challenges of rural areas.

I take this opportunity to let you know that last week the new rural vision website went live. It provides informative pages grouping in one place all the rural vision-related actions and also includes the Rural Observatory.

I want to thank you once again for your support for the creation of the Rural Pact, because our shared goals of the vision can only be achieved if we work together. So our ambition is to gather all the actors playing a role in rural areas. I am confident that the rural vision, with its strategic objectives, including the demographic ones, together with the Rural Pact process and EU operational funding support, is on the right track to deliver on its goals. Next year we will assess our progress and reflect on ways forward.

Since many of you mentioned predation and carnivores, I want to tell you that while predation by large carnivores may not be considered to be a key driver of abandonment of livestock farming in European mountain areas, or cannot be blamed for the demographic challenges of rural areas, it is a particular challenge for livestock grazing in areas where these species have long been absent.

Believe me – as I have repeated several times in this House – we established a new portfolio on demography. A new portfolio on demography is not established by coincidence. We are aware of demographic change and we are aware of territorial disparities. We are aware that, geographically, 80% of European territory is covered by rural areas and we know that only one third of the European population lives there. And we know that this is a huge potential and this is the reason why we adopted and we offer this long-term vision for rural areas.

We will do our utmost to make these areas attractive, prosperous and also efficient again. And we want them to attract newcomers also. This is our goal, too, and this is the reason why we are talking about this under the portfolio of demography. So we want to make these areas vibrant again.

We understand what you are saying on services, on infrastructure. But of course, we are not talking only about farming. We are talking about beyond farming, beyond agriculture, because we know that digital and green priorities, which are priorities of this Commission, should also be implemented in rural areas. And this should be a very important issue in order to have new jobs, new jobs that are not only in farming, but of course we know that farming is very important as we know that we have problems with food nowadays.

So I praise very much the work of the rapporteur and the co-rapporteurs on this resolution. I strongly support your calls on the Council to express its opinion about the future of rural areas in formal Council conclusions. In that regard, we are already in contact with the Spanish authorities, with the Spanish presidency of the Council for the second half of next year, and your call definitely gives further impetus for some genuinely strong conclusions.

There is only one more comment from my side. Yes, we want to do this rural tax and all this together, but a lot depends on local, regional and national authorities. Funding is here, but they have to use it in the best possible way and use it consistently. Thank you very much once again and I am looking forward to making this long-term vision a reality together.

Isabel Carvalhais, *Rapporteur.* – Senhora Presidente, Senhora Comissária, há pouco não me dirigi a si, porque ainda não a tinha visto enquanto estava a falar. Foi um prazer escutá-la.

Gostava de dizer muito brevemente que, de facto, agradeço de forma muito sublinhada a todos os colegas e relatores-sombra que colaboraram neste relatório. Devo dizer que foi um trabalho muito empenhado e muito intenso no sentido de alcançarmos um texto que espelhasse aquilo que são as nossas diferentes visões sobre o mundo rural, mas que se tocam em tantos pontos. Volto a dizer, vejam só a quantidade de colegas que aqui está. Isto é a prova de que o mundo rural não move multidões. São tão poucas as oportunidades que nós temos de falar sobre o mundo rural. Por isso, aquilo que eu peço aos colegas é que se lembrem do seguinte:

Os 80 parágrafos deste relatório são sobre e são para estes 137 milhões de pessoas que vivem nos 80% de zonas rurais do nosso território, da União Europeia. É para elas este relatório, é sobre elas, é sobre os seus problemas, não é contra os carnívoros, não é contra os lobos. Que isto fique muito claro. Quem, com honestidade e seriedade, ler o parágrafo 36 deste relatório e o comparar com a redação da resolução sobre os carnívoros da passada sessão plenária, percebe perfeitamente o esforço negocial que exigiu. Ou era isto, ou era simplesmente não ter nada e ignorar algo que é profundamente impactante nas populações. São as populações rurais que nos dão conta desta sua preocupação e nós temos que as auxiliar. Ninguém me convence de que abrir pontualmente e eventualmente a Diretiva Habitat signifique matar os lobos, a não ser que haja lóbis que o queiram, porque não tem que ser essa a solução. No meu país, por exemplo, nós fizemos a realocação, o realojamento, o *displacement* destas populações que estavam praticamente dizimadas. Haverá, com certeza, outras possibilidades que não impliquem a morte destes seres, mas este relatório não é sobre os lobos, não é sobre os javalis, não é sobre os ursos, é sobre as pessoas. Tenhamos a coragem, a decência política de alguma vez reconhecermos a importância destes 137 milhões de pessoas que esperam que sejamos consequentes nas nossas mensagens. Agradeço muito profundamente as palavras da Senhora Comissária e o esforço, enfim, o empenho

demonstrado por parte da Comissão em atender a estas demandas para que tenhamos, de facto, um futuro brilhante e resiliente para o nosso mundo rural, que passe do papel e da retórica.

Presidente. – La discussione è chiusa.

La votazione si svolgerà nella giornata di domani.

Dichiarazioni scritte (articolo 171)

Sara Cerdas (S&D), *por escrito*. – As áreas rurais representam 83 % do total do território europeu e albergam cerca de 137 milhões de pessoas, sendo uma expressão significativa da população europeia. Estas áreas enfrentam diversos desafios, como o isolamento, idadismo e excessivo êxodo rural, o que depois se verifica na falta de oportunidades, desigualdades, e falta de acesso a serviços e bens, muitas vezes exacerbados quando conectados a outros fatores, como a ultraperiferia ou orografia difícil.

Justifica-se assim o interesse e a importância de chamar atenção para uma resposta que tente fazer face a estas dificuldades, inclusive através do reconhecimento do seu enorme potencial em áreas de suma importância: produção alimentar e agrícola, produção de energias renováveis, proteção da biodiversidade, entre outras. Investimento nestas áreas irá promover a atratividade das áreas, para emprego e turismo, com repercussões sociais muito positivas. Para tal, é necessário envolvimento das autoridades regionais e locais, que melhor saberão as características específicas das regiões, assim como aumento do financiamento, nomeadamente através dos fundos de coesão.

Encaminhar o desenvolvimento destas zonas neste caminho responde a desafios presentes e futuros que garantem coesão social e territorial, combatem o despovoamento e alinham-se dentro dos objetivos de proteção do planeta que prosseguimos.

Karol Karski (ECR), *na piśmie*. – Sprawozdanie pani Carvalhais jest ważnym głosem w debacie nad przyszłością rolnictwa UE. Podstawową rolą obszarów wiejskich powinna być gospodarka rolna ukierunkowana na produkcję żywności, a produkcja ta musi być opłacalna dla rolników, zapewniając im godny byt. Dobrze, że to sprawozdanie silnie akcentuje ten aspekt. Pragmatyczne młode pokolenie masowo ucieka ze wsi do miast w poszukiwaniu dla siebie lepszych szans, dlatego praca na roli musi być atrakcyjna pod względem ekonomicznym i społecznym. Ponadto zwracam uwagę na konieczność zapewnienia odpowiedniego finansowania celów WPR. W nową perspektywę finansową wkraczamy z budżetem zmniejszonym o 8% w stosunku do lat poprzednich, a przed sektorem stanęły wyzwania bez precedensu: reforma WPR i nowa warunkowość płatności, skutki pandemii, galopujące ceny kosztów produkcji, głównie energii i nawozów sztucznych. Dlatego obszary wiejskie powinny być wspierane nie tylko ze środków WPR, ale również pozostałych polityk UE, w tym w szczególności polityki spójności, Instrumentu na rzecz Odbudowy i Zwiększania Odporności, programu InvestEU oraz innych unijnych programów. Wreszcie apeluję do KE, aby wdrażając poszczególne etapy strategii szanowała zasadę pomocniczości, szanowała różnice i tradycje regionalne i ukierunkowała swoje działania na zwiększanie synergii między obszarami wiejskimi na szczeblu krajowym.

Alin Mituța (Renew), *in writing*. – Countless villages in Europe are facing depopulation due to a lack of opportunities and access to jobs, education, health or basic infrastructure. This report on the long-term vision for rural area recognises all these problems and makes a series of very good proposals in this regard.

The Union and Member States have at their disposal many tools to help rural areas make the most of the potential that many villages still have, so that young people in particular want to return to the countryside, develop businesses and set up families.

What we need to do is to better coordinate all of these in an effective manner, to ensure that these resources go where they are needed the most and make an impact in the local community. All national strategic plans have been adopted by now, and I hope that the Commission and Member States ensure that there are sufficient measures being financed in each and every one of them, to ensure that villages all over Europe receive the much needed support to become attractive, especially for young people.

Dan-Ștefan Motreanu (PPE), *în scris*. – Zonele rurale reprezintă o parte importantă din patrimoniul nostru natural, identitar și cultural, sunt cele care ne oferă materiile prime vitale, au un rol important în producția de energie și protecția mediului și un rol vital în asigurarea securității alimentare, fiind decisive în efectuarea tranziției sociale, verzi și digitale. Cu toate acestea, mai ales în ultimii ani, decalajul și disparitățile între mediul rural și urban au crescut. Astfel, zonele rurale se confruntă cu îmbătrânirea populației, declinul demografic, accesul redus la servicii publice esențiale, infrastructura precară, riscul crescut de sărăcie și cu potențialul redus de a combate efectele multiplelor crize. Din aceste motive, solicit Comisiei Europene și statelor membre să accelereze evaluarea tuturor mecanismelor de dezvoltarea rurală, să prezinte strategii și alocări financiare integrate și adaptate caracteristicilor fiecărei zone rurale. Nu în ultimul rând, solicit Comisiei Europene să prezinte o abordare integrată a finanțării destinată dezvoltării zonelor rurale bazată pe o sinergie consolidată între Pilonul 2 PAC și fondurile de coeziune în vederea asigurării finanțării necesare pentru o dezvoltare sustenabilă a zonelor rurale care să garanteze locuitorilor acestora un nivel ridicat al calității vieții.

Andżelika Anna Możdżanowska (ECR), *na piśmie*. – To sprawozdanie jest ważnym głosem w debacie nad przyszłością unijnego rolnictwa, ale to przede wszystkim zapewnienie bezpieczeństwa żywnościowego dla blisko 500 mln Europejczyków. Reforma Wspólnej Polityki Rolnej, nowa warunkowość płatności, skutki pandemii, galopujące ceny kosztów produkcji (gazu i nawozów) czy skutki zmian demograficznych to wyzwania, przed którymi obecnie stoimy. Musimy zapewnić odpowiednie finansowanie obszarów wiejskich nie tylko ze środków WPR, ale również pozostałych polityk Unii Europejskiej: polityki spójności, Instrumentu na rzecz Odbudowy i Zwiększania Odporności, programu InvestEU czy innych unijnych programów.

Bardzo się cieszę, że w sprawozdaniu wprowadziliśmy zapis dotyczący zwiększenia ochrony rolników przed atakami drapieżników, np. wilków (ustęp 36). Nie oznaczałoby to oczywiście odstąpienia od ochrony wilków. Mówimy tu o możliwości prowadzenia działań na wybranych obszarach UE, np. pasterskich dla zapewnienia rentowności rolnictwa i zrównoważonego współistnienia ludzi i zwierząt. Jednocześnie uważam, że to bardzo dobry krok w kierunku zacieśniania współpracy między łowiectwem a rolnictwem. Jako wiceprzewodnicząca intergrupy „Bioróżnorodność, Łowiectwo, Wieś" zawsze zabiegałam o wykorzystanie, z odpowiednim wsparciem, lokalnego potencjału. Współpraca rolników, leśników, rybaków, kół gospodyń wiejskich wpłynie na rozwój obszarów wiejskich, ale także jest szansą na zróżnicowanie działalności gospodarczej, jak turystyka, rekreacja, kultura.

Tom Vandenkendelaere (PPE), *schriftelijk*. – Het platteland staat in de volgende decennia voor cruciale uitdagingen: bevolkingsafname, vergrijzing, minder hoogwaardige jobs, minder digitale connectiviteit, klimaatverandering en in vergelijking met andere gebieden vaak minder toegang tot diensten van algemeen belang. De kloof tussen de politiek van de stad en die van het platteland wordt zo steeds groter. Nochtans is het van groot belang dat inwoners gelijke toegang hebben tot gezondheidszorg, kinderopvang, ouderenzorg, maar eveneens tot vlotte mobiliteit, digitale connectiviteit of post- en bankdiensten. Ook de landbouw – die via jobs en de productie van kwaliteitsvol voedsel nochtans een cruciale rol speelt op het platteland – staat voor enorme uitdagingen. Helaas zijn er steeds minder (jonge) landbouwers. Uit nieuwe cijfers blijkt dat in 2020 slechts 11,9 % van de landbouwers onder de 40 jaar was, met een gemiddelde leeftijd van 57. Tegelijk is het aantal landbouwbedrijven tussen 2005 en 2020 verminderd met maar liefst 5,3 miljoen. Gezien het voornoemde, is het absoluut noodzakelijk dat we hier vandaag van de Europese Commissie een langetermijnvisie voor het platteland vragen die inzet op een sterk, verbonden, veerkrachtig en welvarend platteland. Met een duidelijk plan van aanpak, voldoende budget en oog voor de uitdagingen die ik zonet genoemd heb, zullen we al heel wat stappen vooruit zetten.

16. Bewältigung der anhaltenden Herausforderungen im Luftverkehrssektor und der Auswirkungen auf Fluggäste, Arbeitnehmer, Kapazität und Sicherheit (Aussprache)

Presidente. – L'ordine del giorno reca la dichiarazione della Commissione «Affrontare le sfide persistenti nel settore del trasporto aereo e il loro impatto su passeggeri, lavoratori, capacità e sicurezza» (2022/2995(RSP))

Adina-Ioana Vălean, *Member of the Commission*. – Madam President, thank you for putting this debate on the agenda.

Montag, 12. Dezember 2022

Aviation has faced unprecedented challenges in the past couple of years. COVID was a huge blow. Not only did traffic drop to zero, but we saw how difficult it is to scale back after two years of travel restrictions. The financial consequences of the COVID crisis will weigh on the sector for a long time. Add to this the war in Ukraine and the sanctions on Russia, which continue to complicate air space use while also driving up energy prices. We have also witnessed the impact of increasing extreme weather events, challenging flight paths and conditions, as well as reminding us of the importance of decarbonising aviation.

And there is a diversification of air traffic, with more unmanned aircraft systems due to enter our airspace in the next years. Disruption is the new normal, so we need to work on building up the resilience and adaptation of aviation so that Europeans can continue to benefit from its opportunities, both as passengers and as workers. With the Fit for 55 package we have already made enormous steps to decarbonise aviation. So it's good to also focus during tonight's debate on different challenges of the sector, namely the ones for passengers, workers, capacity and safety.

Let me start with passengers. Our regulation on air passengers' rights provides already today the highest level of protection to air passengers at a global level. During the pandemic and over the summer, we made it clear that it was the duty of airlines to respect those rights. We worked with national consumer authorities to ensure the proper enforcement of EU consumer protection laws. The passengers must come first, otherwise there is no trust. And if there is no trust, there will be no market.

Although we have a relatively robust system in place, there are some issues that could be better addressed. In particular, a large part of European citizens are still unaware of their rights as air passengers. Even when they are entitled to financial compensation, many of them give up in front of administrative difficulties during the complicated handling process. Already in 2013, the Commission tabled amendments to the Air Passenger Rights Regulation with a view to clarify and simplify the existing rules, provide passengers with more effective complaint handling procedures and strengthen enforcement. I would like to see this proposal being discussed again in Council as we believe it is still fit for purpose. The Commission also intends to make new proposals next year. My services are currently assessing the possibility of new protections in the event of insolvency of carriers or liquidity crises. We are also investigating the possibility of new rights for passengers travelling multimodal.

Aviation is an ecosystem. It cannot work unless all parts of the system are functioning properly. Airlines, airports, air traffic controllers, ground handlers and other workers and service providers. All parts are reliant on each other and, naturally, all parts are reliant on the people that they employ. So ensuring high quality and sustainable employment in the aviation sector must be a priority. During the pandemic, we worked with Commissioner Schmidt to help workers keep stable working environments and income whilst also helping businesses stay afloat and able to retain staff. We have also launched a range of short and long-term initiatives aimed at promoting and supporting high social standards in the aviation sector, as well as bringing in more women to the sector. Namely, we have set up expert group working groups to provide recommendations and best practices on key employment issues such as self-employment, the enforcement of applicable labour law oversight, the role of intermediaries and pay to fly schemes. The Commission is also fully committed to ensuring that the legal framework in aviation is fit for purpose in this post-pandemic era. We have been conducting a thorough review of the regulatory framework to determine which improvements are needed, as announced in our Smart and Sustainable Mobility strategy.

Clarifying concepts such as operational base or nature of employment could be helpful. We are looking into this. This is, however, a larger issue than the scope of the service regulation. Finding the right solutions needs joint efforts on the Member States side as well, because the enforcement of high social standards is primarily the role of the competent national authorities. And then, of course, it is first and foremost for the employers themselves to ensure that working conditions are sufficient to attract and retain staff. Social dialogue should give the opportunity to agree on acceptable conditions. And of course we support this. In fact, we organised many stakeholder coordination meetings over the summer to support dialogue and joint solutions. In those meetings, a key issue we discussed was also capacity. Flight numbers in 2022 are near pre-COVID levels, around 85% of 2019 traffic levels in most parts of the European network, and above 2019 levels in some parts of the network last summer. And this in a much more constrained airspace due to the impact of the Russian war on Ukraine. Capacity constraints and air traffic management delays do not bode well for next summer and we risk returning to a major capacity crisis in the European skies as already experienced before COVID.

So there is no time to spare. And the single European sky reform currently in negotiation between the Parliament and the Council is absolutely necessary to drive efficiency and address unnecessary emissions from congestion problems. I am counting on you to help find solutions to take this reform forward.

Finally, let me stress that in everything that we do, safety is always our number one consideration. The European aviation safety system is recognised globally as being one of the safest. But here, too, there are new challenges. An important effect of the COVID crisis was that much of the regular income for aviation safety oversight, which stems from industry fees and charges, was lost, thus limiting resources. Part of our work under the single European Sky Pillar is to help authorities prioritise those resources adequately by setting performance term targets, including on safety. And of course, we rely on IASA as our trusted partner in developing a robust regulatory safety framework and ensuring its oversight and implementation. This is all the more important given new challenges such as the integration of drones into our traditional aviation system or safety and security threats, including cybersecurity, that are heightened in the current geopolitical context. We are constantly monitoring the situation and responding to these issues in full cooperation with you and national oversight authorities and with industry. So thank you very much for listening to me. And it's my turn to listen to you all, which I will do with pleasure.

Magdalena Adamowicz, *w imieniu grupy PPE*. – Szanowna Pani Przewodnicząca! Pani Komisarz! Ani uchwalenie, ani istnienie prawa, lecz jego egzekwowanie stanowi o jego efektywności. Wydaje się, że podróżujący w Unii Europejskiej cieszą się najwyższym na świecie standardem praw ochrony pasażerów linii lotniczych. Czy jednak najwyższe standardy są rzeczywiście odczuwalne przez obywateli Unii ? Nie!

W praktyce wyegzekwowanie tych praw, w tym dochodzenie odszkodowań, jest dla wielu podróżnych bardzo trudne. Co prawda unijne przepisy oferują nam m.in. prawo do zwrotu kosztów, prawo do zmiany trasy, jak również prawo do opieki w określonych okolicznościach, prawo do utrzymania odszkodowania finansowego. Powtórzę jednak, unijne przepisy w zakresie ochrony praw pasażerów linii lotniczych mogą spełnić swoją rolę tylko wówczas, gdy po pierwsze, pasażerowie będą mieli pełną świadomość i znali przysługujące im prawa. Gdy przepisy te będą w pełni przestrzegane przez same linie lotnicze. Gdy będą należycie egzekwowane. Dlatego rewizja rozporządzenia 261/4, musi koncentrować się na wzmocnieniu praw konsumentów, praw pasażerów, a nie na ewentualnym ich ograniczeniu. Bowiem i takie propozycje niestety się pojawiają.

Vera Tax, *namens de S&D-Fractie*. – Voorzitter, geachte commissaris Vălean, steeds meer vluchten in Europa worden geannuleerd door een tekort aan medewerkers. Grondpersoneel heeft het zwaar, maar het gaat nog verder. Ook bij sommige vliegtuigmaatschappijen worden crewleden en piloten tot in de cockpit tot het uiterste gedreven. De Europese Pilotenbond en de Europese Transportvakbond hebben zorgwekkende berichten ontvangen en ernstige oververmoeidheid bij piloten en cabinepersoneel geconstateerd, met name van één luchtvaartmaatschappij.

Montag, 12. Dezember 2022

Deze signalen zijn uiteraard gedeeld met het EASA, het Agentschap van de Europese Unie voor de veiligheid van de luchtvaart, de toezichthoudende instantie namens de Europese Commissie. Maar bij navraag doen zij geen enkele uitspraak over de wijze waarop zij deze klachten in behandeling nemen en of zij deze klachten onderzoeken. Zij verwijzen terug naar de Europese Commissie. En bij navraag bij de Commissie door de pers zegt de Commissie niet op de hoogte te zijn van klachten. Het klassieke "van het kastje naar de muur", maar wel een hele gevaarlijke. Dit gaat over vliegveiligheid.

Daarom schreef ik de Commissie een brief met de vraag om hier snel duidelijkheid over te geven. Maar ook ik heb nog niets van de Commissie gehoord. En daarom vraag ik het hier nu nog een keer. Rapporteert het Agentschap van de Europese Unie voor de veiligheid van de luchtvaart rechtstreeks aan de Commissie als het gaat over klachten van vermoeidheid van piloten? En zo ja, kunt u dan bevestigen dat de betreffende klachten grondig worden onderzocht en dat u indien nodig tot actie overgaat?

José Ramón Bauzá Díaz (Renew). – Señora presidenta, señora comisaria, por suerte para todos, la pandemia forma más parte del pasado que del presente. Lamentablemente, no para el sector aéreo que, como otros sectores de nuestra economía, todavía sufre sus graves consecuencias.

La situación financiera de las compañías aéreas es, a día de hoy, muy delicada y, ante esta situación, algunas compañías han solicitado a la Comisión Europea tener un mayor acceso al capital internacional. Se trata de un tema vital para la industria, porque puede recuperarse de la crisis y devolver la deuda que ha acumulado durante este tiempo, realizar las inversiones necesarias para descarbonizar el sector y también continuar asegurando una Europa conectada.

La aviación, por lo tanto, es el único sector en Europa que tiene restricciones de acceso al capital internacional que proceden de normas creadas en los años cuarenta a nivel mundial, cuando la aviación era muy diferente a la aviación que vemos hoy en día. Por eso mismo, esas restricciones no tienen ningún impacto positivo para el consumidor, tampoco para las compañías y sus trabajadores ni tampoco para el conjunto de la economía. Por eso mismo, un informe económico reciente apunta a que un mejor acceso al capital internacional podría preservar hasta 15 000 puestos de trabajo en tiempos de crisis y tendría un impacto para la economía de la Unión Europea de en torno a 3 000 millones de euros.

Por lo tanto, señora comisaria, no existe ninguna razón para no revisar esta normativa de una forma inmediata y, precisamente, para que no convirtamos, en este caso, el pasado en presente.

Ciarán Cuffe, *on behalf of the Verts/ALE Group*. – Madam President, Commissioner Vălean, the aviation sector has already recovered from the impact of COVID-19, but two challenges remain – environmental and social. The ongoing race to the bottom on labour standards in the aviation sector is failing workers and passengers alike. This process started with accelerated liberalisation in the 1990s, making flying affordable and pervasive, but at a great cost. It has made working in the sector unattractive for many, and it causes capacity problems and serious disruption for passengers. And this is particularly true for ground handling.

The race to the bottom brings safety risks as well, and this has been highlighted by EASA. The Commission, therefore, must urgently revise the Air Services Regulation and the Ground-handling Directive in time for finalisation during the current mandate. We have to prioritise higher social standards.

Clare Daly, *on behalf of The Left Group*. – Madam President, there are persistent challenges in the aviation sector, particularly for workers, and the Commission has to take its responsibility for its part in that. For the past 15 years, the Parliament has been calling for action to address the situation, but for all the words, there is very little to show for it.

Earlier this year, 13 members of the TRAN Committee sent a letter to the Commissioner's cabinet reaffirming our strong support for Regulation (EC) No 1008/2008 dealing with the social conditions for air crew. We were demanding legislative proposals by the end of this year to allow us to complete this revision in this mandate. What did we get? Nothing. Postponed; another impact assessment; it is not even on the Commission's work programme for 2023. So pilots and crew can look forward to the continuation of bogus self-employment, pay-to-fly, undeclared work, non-compliance with the posting legislation, and on and on.

Yes, COVID had a huge impact, but there was precious little interest in workers' rights before this. So you want to get your act together, or like the railway workers, aviation workers are going to have to take action.

Enikő Győri (NI). – Elnök Asszony! Örülök, hogy végre olyan kérdést is napirendre tűz ez a ház, amely a polgárainkat közvetlenül érinti. Nyáron, amikor késések, járattörlések, órákig tartó várakozás, halmokban álló bőröndök uralták a reptereket, 46 képviselőtársammal írásbeli választ igénylő kérdést intéztünk a Bizottsághoz. A testület kitérő választ adott, és hárított, a nemzeti hatóságokra mutogatott, amikor azt feszegettük, hogyan tartatja be a légitársaságokkal a vonatkozó uniós jogszabályokat. Míg más esetben a Bizottságot nem szokta feszélyezni, ha túllép a hatáskörén, most mégis ezzel a kifogással takarózott. Hiába van európai jogszabály, ha a légitársaságok megtalálják a kiskapukat. Csak egy konkrét példa: lehet például panaszt emelni, de informatikus diplomával sem lehet könnyen megtalálni egy légitársaság honlapján, hogy pontosan hol.

Örülök, hogy a mostani vitában a biztos asszony konstruktívabb hangot ütött meg. Arra kérem a Bizottságot, szerezzen érvényt a légi utasok jogainak, hozzon létre egy minden tagállamban elérhető, az érintettek számára könnyen hozzáférhető és nyomonkövethető igényérvényesítési rendszert. Utasbarát, praktikus megoldás kell, nem új hivatal! Nem hagyhatjuk, hogy állandósuljon a káosz a légi közlekedésben, és csak egy apró megjegyzés: ma három városból érkeztünk körülbelül egyszerre Strasbourgba délután, és körülbelül tizenötünknek elveszett a csomagja.

Pablo Arias Echeverría (PPE). – Señora presidente, señora comisaria, muchas gracias por estar aquí. La pandemia ha impactado con contundencia en todos los sectores, pero muy en especial en el sector aéreo, haciendo estragos en el derecho fundamental a la movilidad, lo que afecta directamente a algo que me interesa mucho, y le interesa mucho a mi país, como es el turismo. A esto se le suma ahora la crisis energética.

En primer lugar, debemos entender que es un sector absolutamente fundamental para el desarrollo social y económico. La aviación es un facilitador económico y motor de desarrollo. El reto de la sostenibilidad y de la transición verde no es una amenaza, pero sí es un desafío. La descarbonización en el sector de la aviación es un objetivo necesario pero complejo de alcanzar.

Necesitamos tiempo y recursos para alcanzar los objetivos del paquete de medidas «Objetivo 55». Hoy todavía no somos capaces de producir cantidades apreciables de combustibles de aviación sostenible (SAF), existiendo un problema de oferta que el mercado, por sí solo, no puede resolver y cuya inversión será, sin duda, importante. A esto se le suma el nivel de endeudamiento de las compañías aéreas como consecuencia de la pandemia, que es considerablemente alto.

El compromiso del Grupo PPE con la lucha contra el cambio climático es innegable, pero debemos de esclarecer cuál es el precio de la transición verde en el sector aéreo. No podemos restar competitividad a nuestras empresas en detrimento de nuestra economía, de nuestros ciudadanos, ni poner en riesgo cientos de miles de puestos de trabajo en Europa.

Me gustaría concluir recordando los innumerables beneficios que trae consigo el sector de la aviación. Por ello, nuestros esfuerzos deben centrarse en hacer que funcione. Si no lo hacemos, no solo pondremos en riesgo la posición de liderazgo del sector aéreo europeo, sino también el derecho fundamental a la libre circulación.

Isabel García Muñoz (S&D). – Señora presidenta, señora comisaria, el sector de la aviación se enfrenta a numerosos retos que afectan a pasajeros, trabajadores, compañías y, cómo no, al medio ambiente y a la conectividad de Europa.

La COVID-19 paralizó prácticamente el sector, reduciendo al mínimo el tráfico aéreo, con restricciones en la movilidad, afecciones a la conectividad y también a la competitividad. Miles de personas fueron despedidas de sus puestos de trabajo (personal de los aeropuertos, el personal de cabina autónomo, que, en muchas ocasiones, son falsos autónomos), quedándose sin contrato, sin cobertura social. Cuando la situación para el sector empezaba a mejorar, resultó que no se estaba preparado para hacer frente a toda la demanda y el personal despedido no estaba dispuesto a volver en las mismas condiciones. ¿El resultado? El caos que vivimos este verano: retrasos, cancelaciones, pérdidas de equipaje y muchas reclamaciones y descontento social; pasajeros que empezaron a plantearse si volver a coger un avión si la situación no mejoraba.

Actualmente, estamos ante una recuperación acelerada del sector que no debe estar reñida con ser, ante todo, una recuperación responsable. Es imprescindible recuperar la conexión con todos los territorios, especialmente con las islas y las regiones ultraperiféricas. Hay que hacerlo de una forma sostenible medioambientalmente, reduciendo las emisiones todo lo posible, aumentando el uso de combustibles alternativos y apostando por la investigación.

Pero, además, hay que hacerlo con responsabilidad social. Debemos aprovechar este momento crucial para la aviación para garantizar unas condiciones de trabajo óptimas que, sin duda, beneficiarán, además, a la seguridad aérea; sin olvidarnos de que también hay que garantizar los derechos de los pasajeros.

Señora comisaria, como ve, son muchos los retos que tiene la aviación por delante. Me ha gustado escucharle hablar de diálogo social, de condiciones de trabajo, de derechos de los pasajeros, incluso de seguridad. Pero llevamos mucho tiempo esperando la revisión del Reglamento (CE) n.º 1008/2008 y preguntando por ella. ¿Para cuándo esa revisión?

Izaskun Bilbao Barandica (Renew). – Señora presidenta, señora comisaria, el transporte aéreo afronta, tras la pandemia, un enorme reto de sobrevivir y de hacerlo contribuyendo a la descarbonización y con altos estándares de seguridad, que se llevan mal con la degradación de las condiciones laborales.

Este sector es clave para nuestra competitividad, pero también aporta convivencia y construye comunidad, propicia precios asequibles y una libertad de circulación que nos hace plenamente conscientes y protagonistas de nuestra diversidad. Considerémonos, en consecuencia, ante una oportunidad que solo aprovecharemos si las reglas que guiarán los cambios se basan en el diálogo y en el pragmatismo.

El sector necesita que centremos el apoyo público en la innovación de la tecnología aeronáutica, en la operativa y la gestión de los vuelos, que siguen esperando un verdadero cielo único, y en los combustibles alternativos. Y no olvidemos que los más dependientes del transporte aéreo —las regiones ultraperiféricas— necesitan ver reconocida esa realidad en la regulación del comercio de derechos de emisión para el sector.

Y, ¿por qué no? Pensemos en las conexiones internas en algunas RUP como un laboratorio privilegiado para ensayar la potencialidad de nuevas tecnologías aeronáuticas que pueden tener allí, con plena seguridad, por rangos de vuelo, frecuencias y hábitos de movilidad, sus primeras oportunidades comerciales.

Έλενα Κουντουρά (The Left). – Κυρία Πρόεδρε, εκατομμύρια Ευρωπαίοι πολίτες θα μετακινηθούν αεροπορικώς για την εορταστική περίοδο των Χριστουγέννων και της Πρωτοχρονιάς. Η ταλαιπωρία και οι σκηνές ντροπής που είδαμε σε πολλά αεροδρόμια το καλοκαίρι με καθυστερήσεις και ακυρώσεις πτήσεων που έπληξαν και τον τουρισμό, δεν πρέπει να επαναληφθούν ούτε τώρα ούτε φυσικά στο μέλλον. Χρειάζεται άμεσα να εξασφαλιστεί η επαρκής στελέχωση με ανθρώπινο δυναμικό των υπηρεσιών εδάφους στα αεροδρόμια και η βελτίωση των συνθηκών εργασίας και των μισθών για το σύνολο του προσωπικού στις αερομεταφορές, διότι αφορά όχι μόνο στα εργασιακά δικαιώματα, αλλά είναι συγχρόνως μείζον θέμα ασφάλειας.

Επίσης, η αεροπορική συνδεσιμότητα είναι κρίσιμο ζήτημα για τις απομακρυσμένες και απομονωμένες περιοχές και τη νησιωτικότητα. Ιδιαίτερα στα εξωτερικά σύνορα της Ευρώπης, απαιτούνται αξιόπιστες, επαρκείς και προσιτές αεροπορικές συνδέσεις. Επίσης η πράσινη μετάβαση του κλάδου πρέπει να είναι δίκαιη και να μην αφήνει κανέναν πίσω.

Mario Furore (NI). – Signora Presidente, onorevoli colleghi, le problematiche che attanagliano in questo momento il settore aeroportuale sono innanzitutto legate a una politica dell'occupazione che non è stata in grado di tutelare i lavoratori durante la pandemia.

Migliaia di dipendenti sono stati licenziati e ora le compagnie aeree e le società aeroportuali faticano a ripristinare il personale mancante, sovraccaricando di lavoro quello in forza.

Questa situazione è preoccupante perché può mettere a rischio la sicurezza dei viaggiatori. Adesso che l'inverno più rigido si avvicina, con le difficoltà poi legate al maltempo, stiamo già assistendo a ritardi e difficoltà della carenza di personale.

Inoltre la carenza di personale di terra, che si è ridotto del 29 %, sta comportando mancanze nelle operazioni necessarie al funzionamento degli aeroporti, che ricadono principalmente nella gestione dei bagagli, oppure dell'assistenza da fornire, ad esempio, alle persone disabili. Questo è inaccettabile!

L'Unione europea dovrebbe essere al primo posto nella tutela dei viaggiatori e dei lavoratori. Muoviamoci, grazie!

Colm Markey (PPE). – Madam President, Commissioner, ladies and gentlemen, we're all very concerned about the overloaded nature of our main airports. Everybody in this Chamber has experienced in the last 12 months the endless delays and the frustration coming through airports due to staff shortages and various other issues. A previous speaker suggested that the COVID issues had passed. Well today I spent five hours sitting on a plane in Dublin airport on the ground because there was no capability to de-ice the plane. We were left with no food and we couldn't leave the plane.

We need to invest in resources to properly equip our airports so that situations like this don't happen. We need to ensure that our ground staff are properly paid, resourced and trained so that they too can help this situation. I ask you, where were passengers' rights in respect to this situation today? Where were we or where are we being considered in this scenario?

In Ireland, 85% of the flights go through the main Dublin airport. It quite simply can't handle it all. We need to invest in our regional airports to ensure that they are built with proper capacity to handle additional aircraft. This would reduce congestion and would also lead to greater tourism in our regions. We also have to ensure that the like of SAF and renewable technologies cannot be just the preserve of our hub airports. They need to be available to rural and indeed the regional airports.

Our last debate was about a long-term vision for rural areas, but I think we have to include our aviation strategy as regards the rural areas as well, because we need to ensure that connectivity to the regions is just as important as connectivity to our main cities.

Jan-Christoph Oetjen (Renew). – Madam President, we're talking about persistent challenges and one of those persistent challenges is not well addressed, from my point of view, and this is the change of legislation that we do in this House very regularly, dear colleagues, and this is challenging for the aviation sector because it is a global business, and in this global business we are addressing, on a European level, policies that are changing the market.

We have ReFuelEU aviation with the blending mandate. We have, possibly, a kerosene tax and we have now the deal for ETS aviation. So all this is raising the prices, and it's rightly so, because the prices do not reflect the CO_2 emissions from the sector. But this has consequences as well on the level playing field, on connectivity and on market distortion. So I am happy that in the ETS aviation file we included the CEF allowances that have been developed and in my office in order to address some of those challenges.

But one last sentence as well. As we talk about CO_2 emissions, there's no, and I repeat no, single good argument for not doing the single European sky. And you said to us, Madam Commissioner, you count on us in order to deliver the single European sky. We are ready to do so. But please convince with us the Member States that are blocking this. We can solve up to save up to 10% of CO_2 emissions if we realise the single European sky. We cannot wait for this. We have to use it.

Edina Tóth (NI). – Elnök Asszony! Örömömre szolgál, hogy napirendre került ez a téma, melynek magam is kezdeményezője voltam, mivel rendkívül fontos és aktuális problémának tartom ezt a kérdést. Tisztában vagyunk azzal, hogy a Covid-járvány különösen nehezen érintette a légitársaságokat. Ez azonban nem lehet ok arra, hogy a jelenlegi helyzetet szó nélkül hagyjuk. Ideje, hogy az uniós intézmények végre foglalkozzanak a reptereken és a légiközlekedésben állandósult káosszal, amelynek mindenekelőtt az utasok látják kárát.

A légitársaságok láthatóan kihasználják a szabályozás végrehajtásának hiányosságait, ezért elengedhetetlen, hogy a Bizottság fellépjen az állampolgárok védelme érdekében. Fontos, hogy az uniós szabályok ne csak üres ígéretek maradjanak, hanem ténylegesen érvényesüljenek. Ha ez nem lehetséges, akkor jobb jogszabályokat kell alkotnunk. Gyors, hatékony, a fogyasztók érdekeit középpontba helyező uniós szintű fellépésre van szükség.

Montag, 12. Dezember 2022

Procedura «catch the eye»

Stanislav Polčák (PPE). – Paní předsedající, pokusím se dodržet jednu minutu. Udržitelná mobilita je nepochybně jednou z největších výzev příštích desetiletí. Čelíme obrovským dopadům z narůstající dopravy. Lidé chtějí cestovat, chtějí mít dostupné služby, cestují za nimi a rovněž tak výrobky a zboží musí proudit. To představuje opravdu obrovské dopady a nárůsty emisí. Jak environmentální dopady, tak také dopady zdravotní, dopady na biodiverzitu, ty jsou obrovské. A je důležité i podtrhnout, že najít udržitelné řešení dopravy pro jednadvacáté století je úkol legislativní a strategický. Pro nás je důležité, abychom předložili v tomto parlamentu legislativu, za kterou budeme stát. Já si myslím, že toto je jeden z nejvýznamnějších úkolů, který máme, najít udržitelné řešení dopravy pro jednadvacáté století.

Juozas Olekas (S&D). – Gerbiama Pirmininke, gerbiama Komisijos nare. Iš tikrųjų tvarus judėjimas yra labai svarbus apsaugant ir pačio judėjimo galimybę Europos Sąjungoje, ir apsaugant mūsų gamtą neteršiant aplinkos. Tačiau svarbu sudaryti ir galimybes Europos piliečiams laisvai judėti ir užtikrinti sąlygas, kad jie galėtų tą atlikti laiku, ir turėtų galimybę mūsų laisvoje erdvėje judėti. Bet taip pat noriu pabrėžti, kad ypatingai svarbu pritaikant šias taisykles sudaryti tinkamas darbo sąlygas tiems, kurie darbuojasi aviacijoje, nes laiku įvykdomi skrydžiai yra sąlygos poilsiui. Tas viskas turėtų buti sutvarkyta ir turėtų būti garantuota ne tik mūsų teisės aktuose, bet taip pat ir įgyvendinta praktikoje.

João Pimenta Lopes (The Left). – Senhora Presidente, no verão passado viveu-se o caos nos aeroportos. Os problemas continuam por resolver e, às portas de mais uma época festiva, milhares de passageiros voltam a ser afetados e os trabalhadores sobrecarregados.

A opção de despedir cerca de 7 milhões de trabalhadores durante a pandemia comprometeu a capacidade de resposta face ao aumento da operação. A Comissão, corresponsável por anos de liberalização do sector da aviação, condição que está inevitavelmente relacionada com esta situação, lava as mãos como Pilatos. Primeiro liberalizaram, agora fazem-se espantados perante a evidência da situação que criaram. Esperavam-se milagres?

A mesma Comissão, em nome da dita concorrência, molda planos de reestruturação de companhias de bandeira, como a TAP, em benefício de alguns operadores. A distorção do mercado, se for a favor das *low cost* e dos colossos europeus da aviação, já não é um problema. Agora falam, como aqui a senhora comissária falou, em segurança, mas abrem caminho para a operação só com um piloto pondo em causa a segurança na aviação civil. Ganha o capital, perde o sector público e a soberania dos Estados.

Reverter o processo liberalizador do setor aéreo é, por tudo isto, cada vez mais necessário.

Mick Wallace (The Left). – Madam President, the main reason airports are struggling to serve passengers properly is because of labour shortages. These labour shortages exist because airports and airlines have treated our workers so poorly for so long.

The air travel crisis is the result of an aggressive cost-cutting measures by airlines and employers for the past 25 years to make the cost of labour as low as possible. This has reduced both the quality of work and the quantity of workers available. And this is not just an issue for airport workers; ground crew and baggage handlers, pilots and cabin crew are also affected.

Extreme liberalisation leads to a race to the bottom in airport security, in ground handling, in cabin crew. This fundamentally undermines workers' wages, conditions and safety, as well as passenger safety. The race to the bottom is total madness, and it has to be reversed.

(Fine della procedura «catch the eye»)

Adina-Ioana Vălean, *Member of the Commission*. – Madam President, thank you for the contributions to this debate. I appreciate your concerns for the sector and your support in ensuring its safe and sustainable recovery. I would say that not all of you are right, and especially those who are criticising the level of protection for the rights of passengers. I'm repeating the fact that the main problem here, when there is congestion and there are delays, is not that we do not have enough legislation, but it's not well known, and is not supported by the authorities which are supposed to support it. So it's not about a new legislation or new things we are going to put forward, but we have to implement it.

And during COVID, you know very well that we did a lot of things and the Commission pushed as much as possible the Member States, the agencies for consumer protection, to cooperate. We started infringements. So we are doing what we can, but in the end it's about implementing and making these rights better known.

Some of you discussed rightfully about the impact of decarbonisation and the measures we are supposed to take for the sector, by saying on the one hand that it will come with a new burden which will increase prices, or, the opposite, others saying that we are not doing enough and soon enough, but indeed the decarbonisation needs have to be done in a way that promotes growth and gives the European airlines a competitive edge, because we are looking to it as a global industry as it was rightfully mentioned here. And this was the angle we took through ReFuelEU in aviation. We are trying to establish a way, an industrial angle to decarbonisation of our aviation, creating the market for alternative fuels.

And since I'm talking about alternative fuels, this is in this regulation recognised the particular attention we are paying to specific needs of the islands or the outermost regions, the smaller airports. These will benefit from preferential treatment to protect their connectivity, for example, the sustainable alternative fuel allowances that will help bridge the price gap between kerosene and sustainable aviation fuels, and also the possibility to request special treatment under the anti-tankering provisions. So I keep this all the time in mind and I am trying my best to support the connectivity for islands and outer regions.

Thank you, Mr Oetjen, for helping to come up with CEF allowances. We are doing our best to persuade Member States on this Single European Sky, the SES+, and in the meantime we are developing technological solutions with SES, our joint undertaking.

Now the issue which was raised with claims of fatigue or culture in some airlines which creates, well, reports of crew fatigue and complaints. I must tell you that EASA provides regular reports to the Commission on its monitoring and oversight activities. Both the Commission and EASA recognise that fatigue can be a serious safety hazard and needs to be identified and properly mitigated, and we are continuously following this up. There is a continuous ongoing assessment of the EU flight time limitation. The flight limitation regime is run by us alongside Member States. It's involving stakeholders' scientific expertise to monitor the effectiveness of system. The first regular report on the results of the monitoring programme was published in February 2019, and currently the Commission has no data to suggest that the EU flight time limitation regime for pilots would increase the risk of accidents.

I know that you are referring also – Ms Tax – to some allegations made by the pilots' unions regarding the official safety culture at a particular airline. EASA conducted an additional off-site investigation for comprehensive data concerning documented analysis, statistics, evidence, as well as on-site audits, interviewing flight crew members about rostering process, fatigue reporting, safety culture. And I must tell you that it will continue to perform additional inspections on-site for flight crews. And we have absolutely no element at this stage to say that something is non-compliant. But it is monitored permanently, I can assure you. This is no joke.

Then how we provide support to have more workers in the system, because this is, as you know very well, one of the issues why we had the delays and crowded airports. And by the way, the Commission encourages Member States to invest in their airports, new technologies, whatever you want, regional rules or whatever. We are not opposing that. So please do what you consider is best for your connectivity.

But for the workers, you know very well that it's difficult because of the safety rules and the vetting of new workers. So it's a process. We are assured by the industry that this is an ongoing process and things are going to improve.

This would be, I would say, some of the answers I have to your concerns. The Air Service Regulation impact assessment is under way. But for those who are asking that social issues like, I don't know, the operational base to be solved through Air Service Regulation, I'm just reminding you that Air Service Regulation is more than that. And also the social issues are more than Air Service Regulation. So I am not saying that specifically there is the best place to address the social issues, but it's a complex and multifaceted issue which we need to solve, and I'm committed to do so.

Thank you very much for your attention, and let's continue to work together to support this very important sector.

Presidente. – La discussione è chiusa.

Dichiarazioni scritte (articolo 171)

Josianne Cutajar (S&D), *in writing*. – This summer chaos ensued also owing to a lack of staff in the aviation industry. As a result, flights were cancelled or delayed. Items of luggage were lost. And the freedom of movement of individuals throughout the European Union ended up being hampered. We talk about the fact that the freedom of movement is part and parcel of EU values. But what is free movement, when those who live in remote and peripheral regions, including islands, end up struggling to travel affordably and in a timely manner to the mainland?

These are all aspects that we must address for the situation not to repeat itself. When addressing this situation, protecting workers and rights must be a main priority. A lack of human resources means that workers are already spread too thin. Forcing them to work longer hours and under more stress, means a danger to their safety and that of the passengers. It is our responsibility to prevent this. Whilst working towards the digital and green transition, the human aspect must remain central. We must collaborate with all stakeholders to arrive at solutions that offer reliable, affordable and safe transport for all EU citizens, no matter where they come from.

Marian-Jean Marinescu (PPE), *în scris*. – Pandemia Covid-19 a paralizat aviația. Oamenii și-au anulat zborurile forțând companiile aeriene, aeroporturile și serviciile auxiliare la reducerea activității și la concedieri masive. Lipsa resursei umane a condus la noi anulări ale zborurilor vara aceasta.

Aviația are de înfruntat numeroase provocări: angajări îngreunate de salariile mici comparativ cu creșterea costului vieții; capacitatea fizică redusă a aeroporturilor generează întârzieri în gestionarea fluxului de pasageri și a zborurilor; creșterea prețurilor combustibililor afectează profitabilitatea acestui sector; combaterea schimbărilor climatice, creșterea cererii pentru costisitorii combustibili SAF; cererile de anulare a zborurilor regionale și a celor business complică imens situația; escaladarea războiului din Ucraina și sancțiunile impuse companiilor rusești sunt o problemă suplimentară.

Regulamentul esențial care poate rezolva problemele legate de capacitatea aeroporturilor, reducerea emisiilor, consumul de combustibili, durata și prețul zborurilor, Cerul unic european 2+ încă este blocat de Consiliu după o decadă de eforturi PPE de a îmbunătăți situația aviației.

Solicit Comisiei să prezinte o foaie de parcurs pentru rezolvarea acestor probleme, care afectează o întreagă industrie și cetățenii UE.

17. Aktionsplan zur Förderung des Schienenpersonenverkehrs auf Fern- und grenzüberschreitenden Strecken (kurze Darstellung)

Presidente. – L'ordine del giorno reca la breve presentazione della relazione dell'on. Tardino sul piano d'azione per la promozione del trasporto ferroviario di passeggeri transfrontaliero e a lunga percorrenza (2022/2022(INI)) (A9-0242/2022)

Annalisa Tardino, *relatrice*. – Signora Presidente, signora Commissaria, onorevoli colleghi, vorrei innanzitutto ringraziare tutti i colleghi, i relatori ombra, il segretariato, lo staff dei gruppi politici e gli assistenti parlamentari per il lavoro costruttivo che abbiamo portato avanti negli scorsi mesi e che giungerà a conclusione domani, con l'approvazione della nostra relazione sul piano di azione per promuovere i servizi di trasporto ferroviario di passeggeri a lunga percorrenza e transfrontalieri.

Un lavoro molto importante, che ci ha consentito di definire in via unitaria priorità e richieste del settore, con l'obiettivo di migliorare il funzionamento della rete ferroviaria con costi più accessibili.

Un settore competitivo della nostra economia che impiega migliaia di lavoratori che rendono servizi ai cittadini, ma che necessita di diventare più attrattivo rispetto ad altre modalità di trasporto per passeggeri e merci.

Il nostro documento persegue un'ampia gamma di obiettivi, tra cui la creazione di un sistema ferroviario europeo unico, sicuro e totalmente interoperabile; il miglioramento della sostenibilità e la creazione di posti di lavoro.

Si è ritenuto essenziale garantire l'intermodalità del sistema ferroviario con gli altri sistemi di trasporto, anche attraverso la promozione di biglietti unici multimodali, per favorire una soluzione di continuità per i passeggeri che possono viaggiare agevolmente con un unico biglietto attraverso diversi modi di trasporto.

Vogliamo con la nostra proposta tutelare i diritti dei passeggeri: la pari accessibilità, il miglioramento dell'efficienza dei trasporti, la riduzione dei tempi di viaggio e dei prezzi, la promozione di una competizione equa tra gli operatori ferroviari e tra i diversi modi di trasporto, nonché la necessità di un pieno coinvolgimento dei giovani, sia come utenti che come lavoratori.

Sono certa che il potenziamento del trasporto ferroviario di passeggeri a lunga distanza e transfrontaliero svolgerà un ruolo significativo nella promozione del mercato unico europeo, garantendo ai diversi attori condizioni di parità e preservando, al contempo, il principio della mobilità come servizio e il suo ruolo nel promuovere la coesione socio-economica delle regioni europee.

Fin dall'inizio di questo percorso, infatti, mi sono prefissata l'obiettivo di portare avanti il punto di vista di tutti quei territori che presentano condizioni più svantaggiose, sottolineando l'importanza dello sviluppo delle connessioni locali, anche per collegare le periferie e le isole alle grandi città.

Per questo ho voluto insieme insistere sul potenziamento della connettività, con particolare attenzione alle regioni remote, insulari, montane e meno popolate. Non potrà esserci un'efficace trasporto transfrontaliero senza connessioni con le zone remote, anche interne ai singoli Stati membri.

Perciò la relazione sottolinea l'importanza di stimolare gli investimenti per il completamento della TEN-T in tempi celeri, dando priorità all'assegnazione dei fondi ai progetti strategici, eliminando le strozzature e i collegamenti mancanti e completando i segmenti di ultimo miglio, nella logica di mantenere un approccio orientato al mercato per l'alta velocità e la lunga percorrenza, ma garantendo al contempo il servizio pubblico e la continuità delle tratte.

Si persegue poi la digitalizzazione, la semplificazione normativa e l'eliminazione di disposizioni tecniche e procedure farraginose al fine di garantire una migliore disponibilità dei treni.

Sarà importante, inoltre, adeguare la formazione e la certificazione del personale ferroviario alle esigenze future e rendere il settore un'opzione interessante per i giovani.

Tanti obiettivi da centrare attraverso la predisposizione di proposte legislative e, per questo, ringraziando sin da ora la Commissaria per la disponibilità finora mostrata, chiediamo alla Commissione europea di procedere in tal senso, rispettando quanto da noi indicato in questo documento, nell'interesse dei cittadini e del settore.

Procedura «catch the eye»

Montag, 12. Dezember 2022

Karolin Braunsberger-Reinhold (PPE). – Frau Präsidentin, Frau Kommissarin, Berichterstatterin Tadino! Der Bericht zum Aktionsplan zur Förderung des Schienenpersonenverkehrs auf fern- und grenzüberschreitenden Strecken ist ein deutlicher Fortschritt für die Passagiere in der EU. So wollen wir unter anderem festschreiben, dass die Fahrkarten aller Bahnbetreiber über alle Fahrkartenkanäle verkauft werden können, unabhängig von Plattform oder Anbieter. Zusätzlich wollen wir erreichen, Englisch als EU-weit einheitliche Arbeitssprache für Zugführerinnen und Zugführer im Fernverkehr und im grenzüberschreitenden Personenverkehr zu etablieren. So wäre es nicht mehr nötig, die Sprache des durchfahrenen Mitgliedstaates zu sprechen.

Außerdem setzen wir ein Zeichen für einen fairen und zugänglichen Markt für alle Anbieter im Personenschienenverkehr. Konkret haben wir eine Senkung der Schienenzugangsgebühren für grenzüberschreitende Dienste und Transparenz bei deren Berechnung geplant. So können wir die Gleichbehandlung von den etablierten Betreibern und neuen Marktteilnehmern gewährleisten. Durch die verbesserten Wettbewerbsbedingungen erreichen wir mehr Wettbewerb, und davon profitieren vor allem die Passagiere. Deshalb noch einmal vielen Dank für den Plan und vielen Dank an alle.

Juozas Olekas (S&D). – Gerbiama pirmininke, Komisijos nare, pranešėja. Iš tikrųjų tik ką kalbėjome apie aviacijos svarbą, bet geležinkeliai ne ką mažiau svarbu arba gali dar pakeisti daugeliu atvejų aplinkai draugiškesnėmis transporto priemonėmis ir sudaryti galimybes europiečiams keliauti iš vienos Europos Sąjungos dalies į kitą. Aš noriu labai pabrėžti tą aplinkosaugos aspektą, saugumą ir modernumą, skaitmenizaciją, kuri čia taip pat buvo paminėta. Bet taip pat labai svarbu investicijos į šį sektorių. Ir noriu pažymėti vieną iš projektų, kuris atkeliauja ir kuris galėtų būti labai sėkmingas pavyzdys. Tai yra projektas „Rail Baltica“, kuris jungia, kaip ašis – šiaurę ir pietus, kur mes galime keliauti nuo pat šiaurinės Europos Sąjungos dalies į pietus ir apjungti galimybes tiek keliauti keleiviams, ypatingai pabrėžiant jaunimo galimybę pasiekti skirtingas Europos Sąjungos vietas. Taip pat noriu pabrėžti ir galimybę prijungti mūsų šalis kandidates, tokias kaip Ukraina, prie šių projektų, kad jos dar greičiau įsilietų į bendrą Europos Sąjungos erdvę.

Ladislav Ilčić (ECR). – Poštovana predsjedavajuća, poštovane dame i gospodo, ovo izvješće pokazuje da Europska unija može biti vrlo korisna kad se bavi konkretnim pitanjima i prekograničnom suradnjom, a ne nametanjem jedne ideologije svim državama članicama. Nažalost, sad ćemo o ovim korisnim temama pričati samo dvadesetak minuta, a onda ćemo opet satima lamentirati o temama koje nisu u nadležnosti Europskog parlamenta. No, vratimo se na temu.

Ljudi vole putovati i upoznavati druge europske države i kulture, a da bi mogli neometano putovati vlakom s jednog kraja kontinenta na drugi, potrebni su međunarodni željeznički pravci. Njih ne može definirati svaka država sama. U ovakvim je pitanjima suradnja nužna, a može imati i snažne geopolitičke posljedice. Naime, ta željeznička mreža može pomoći i hrvatskim jugoistočnim susjedima da se životno i gospodarski vežu uz europske zemlje. Zato izvjestiteljica ima moju punu podršku.

Mick Wallace (The Left). – Madam President, I welcome the action plan and the Parliament's report. The report acknowledges that high-speed rail passenger volumes nearly doubled between 2001 and 2018 in the EU, proving that there is a demand for high-speed rail whenever it is provided.

However, not all rail services in the EU are equal. Ireland has seen very little improvement in rail service in the same period. The Rosslare to Waterford line closed. Waterford's the only city in the country that does not have trains arriving in the city before 9 o'clock in the morning. The Rosslare to Dublin line has been managed into decline.

Ireland's rail system is almost exclusively a set of radial lines running to and from Dublin with minimal direct interconnectivity between towns and cities outside of Dublin. If you arrive in Rosslare harbour from France or from the UK, you have to go to Dublin first before you go anywhere else. That's crazy.

(Fine della procedura «catch the eye»)

Adina-Ioana Vălean, *Member of the Commission*. – Madam President, honourable Members. First, I would like to thank the rapporteur, Ms Tardino, and the members of the TRAN Committee for this own-initiative report and their support for the analysis and the initiatives presented in the action plan to boost long-distance and cross-border passenger rail.

As stated in the action plan, the Commission will continue with the enforcement of the full and correct implementation of the EU rail acquis and with the removal of remaining barriers that hinder setting up and operating cross-border long distance rail services.

In the coming period we plan to propose a number of initiatives in this regard, this has also been identified in your report. We will propose an initiative on multimodal ticketing. Passengers must be able to see all available travel options and all available fares, not just the options that are of commercial interest to operators or to ticket platforms. The passenger is the one to choose.

Data needs to be open for consumers and businesses in order to drive up the quality of services. We will also propose an initiative on a more efficient process of capacity allocation and traffic management. A key weakness of the current legislative framework is its reliance on an annual timetable process for the management and allocation of capacity. This process is too rigid and does not allow neither long-term planning to ensure optimal use of capacity nor short-term allocation of capacity to accommodate short notice requests. We will tackle this.

Furthermore, we aim to improve the cross-border coordination of capacity, so that cross-border services can be operated more efficiently. Train operators are also inefficient because of obstacles to the mobility of the train drivers across Member States, employers or in terms of road. This is even more important in the rail-freight sector, since 50% of freight trains in Europe are cross-border and are for longer distances.

This is why we will propose a revision of the Train Drivers Directive to ensure that the train drivers can easily move between Member States and rail companies while also benefiting from the last technological innovation. And yes, indeed, the language: it does not exist a common language right now in the rail sector. So the cross-border operations require trained drivers to be able to communicate with dispatchers in different languages. And this is a huge obstacle. And the commission is assessing now possible alternatives to the current requirement in our impact assessment.

We will also revise the technical specification for interoperability. These are vital to provide a common, legally binding European basis for rail, with the possibility to use the same type of trains anywhere. Not only do the specifications ensure interoperability, they should also reduce costs, as harmonised products can be developed once and deployed across the EU and beyond, since the technical specifications for interoperability are becoming the reference regulatory framework for many other countries.

The action plan also announces pilot services, in which interested stakeholders can propose to the Commission their plans for cross-border long-distance passenger services and indicate where they see obstacles the Commission can help with. We do this work taking into account all passengers, including those with reduced mobility and disability, ensuring accessibility.

We have received an encouraging number of interesting proposals and they are currently being evaluated. In January we will present the results of the evaluation and discuss the next steps with the proposers. And with that, I would like to thank you again for your work on this own-initiative report and I am looking forward for its adoption in the plenary.

Presidente. – La discussione è chiusa.

La votazione si svolgerà domani.

Dichiarazioni scritte (articolo 171)

João Pimenta Lopes (The Left), *por escrito*. – Há exatamente um ano, para assinalar o final do propagandeado Ano Europeu da Ferrovia, fiz a viajem entre Lisboa e Estrasburgo de comboio. Uma viagem que, de avião, poderia demorar uma meia dúzia de horas e custaria poucas dezenas de euros. A opção Ferrovia? Seis comboios, três dias em viagem, quase 400 euros só nos bilhetes. Volvido um ano, nada se alterou. Nem a retórica nem a propaganda da União Europeia em torno da Ferrovia e as consequências das suas políticas com os sucessivos pacotes ferroviários, contribuindo diretamente para o encerramento de milhares de km de ferrovia, redução da oferta, degradação do serviço.

Montag, 12. Dezember 2022

A resposta aos problemas da Ferrovia em Portugal e na Europa não se encontram na insistência neste caminho de liberalização, desregulação e mercantilização do setor. Urge reverter estas políticas, valorizar a gestão pública do setor ferroviário nas suas dimensões de operação, infraestrutura, produção e manutenção, promovendo um substantivo investimento público na ferrovia, na sua modernização, o alargamento das redes, a interoperabilidade e os direitos dos passageiros e dos trabalhadores.

18. Ausführungen von einer Minute zu Fragen von politischer Bedeutung

Presidente. – L'ordine del giorno reca gli interventi di un minuto (articolo 172)

Informo gli onorevoli deputati che per gli interventi di un minuto possono prendere la parola rimanendo al loro posto.

Fulvio Martusciello (PPE). – Signora Presidente, onorevoli colleghi, quando in Italia leggo l'articolo 21 della Costituzione, probabilmente non rifletto sul fatto che non è sempre scontata la libertà di manifestare.

Per noi europei è una cosa normale avere la libertà di poter andare in piazza, di poter manifestare le proprie idee. Per tanti che vivono altrove, in paesi come l'Iran, questo diritto non esiste e per questo diritto si muore, si viene impiccati in pubblica piazza.

Ricordiamo in quest'Aula quello che è accaduto nella giornata di oggi, quando il povero Majidreza Rahnavard è stato impiccato soltanto perché aveva manifestato. Aveva 23 anni, aveva una vita davanti, è andato in piazza per difendere le proprie idee, per protestare contro l'ingiustizia della morte di Mahsa Amini.

E allora questo Parlamento deve riflettere su quello che sta diventando l'Iran e deve sviluppare ogni forma di difesa e di sanzione nei confronti di un paese che nega questo diritto.

Peter Pollák (PPE). – Len vďaka osobnej zášti a nenávisti Richarda Sulíka, ktorý bol ešte nedávno koaličným partnerom a ministrom v jasne proeurópskej, proslovenskej vláde Eduarda Hegera, Slovensku hrozí, že sa k moci v strede Európy dostanú skorumpovaní socialisti na čele s Ficom a Pellegrinim, ktorých nominanti dnes sedia v base a začali usvedčovať vrcholných politikov Smeru a Hlasu. Na Slovensku prebieha tretí rok očista prokuratúry, súdov a polície. Za mreže sa dostali vplyvní nominanti socialistických stranám Smeru či Hlasu a podozrenia siahajú priamo k lídrom Ficovi a Pellegrinimu. Dnes priamo v centre Európy hrozí, že korupcia ruka v ruke s mafiou vytrhnú Slovensko z rúk spravodlivosti a otvoria dvere do budúcej vlády fašistom a mafiánom. To, čo sa deje na Slovensku, je veľké poučenie pre všetkých demokratov. Demokracia je ohrozená zradcami. Možno kvôli osobným ambíciám, možno z túžby po pomoci, peniazoch či kvôli nesplateným dlhom sú dnes zradcovia ochotní zapredať Slovensko mafii, oligarchom a fašistom.

Eugen Tomac (PPE). – Doamnă președintă, stimați colegi, libera circulație a persoanelor și a bunurilor sunt libertăți fundamentale ale Tratatului privind funcționarea Uniunii Europene.

Deși România a semnat aderarea la Uniunea Europeană încă din 2005, aceste libertăți îi sunt în continuare negate. Deși România îndeplinește condițiile de aderare la spațiul Schengen, fapt confirmat în repetate rânduri încă din 2011, acest drept îi este și astăzi încă o dată încălcat.

Comisia Europeană a confirmat că România are dreptul la Schengen, Parlamentul European de asemenea. Singura instituție care refuză fără nicio justificare dreptul de aliniere a României cu celelalte state europene este Consiliul Uniunii Europene.

Prin urmare, cer Comisiei Europene să acționeze de îndată împotriva Consiliului Uniunii Europene la Curtea de Justiție a Uniunii Europene și să blocheze astfel de acțiuni antieuropene care încalcă tratatele Uniunii Europene.

Στέλιος Κυμπουρόπουλος (PPE). – Κυρία Πρόεδρε, συνάδελφοι, οι μεταναστευτικές ροές από την Αφρική και την Ασία αυξάνονται δραματικά και βρίσκονται στο υψηλότερο σημείο από την περίοδο 2015-2016. Οι χώρες πρώτης υποδοχής στην Ευρώπη, όπως η χώρα μου, η Ελλάδα, καλούνται και πάλι να επωμιστούν δυσανάλογα μεγάλο βάρος λόγω της γεωγραφικής τους θέσης και του πολύ μικρού αριθμού εθελοντικών μετεγκαταστάσεων. Αυτό ασκεί ολοένα και μεγαλύτερη πίεση στα συστήματα ασύλου και υποδοχής και είναι κάτι το οποίο δεν μπορεί να συνεχιστεί. Για πολλοστή φορά καλούμε τις κυβερνήσεις να ακούσουν τη φωνή αυτού εδώ του Κοινοβουλίου. Χρειαζόμαστε άμεσα μια πραγματική ευρωπαϊκή λύση, μια λύση η οποία θα διέπεται από την αρχή της αλληλεγγύης, η οποία θα αντιμετωπίζει στη ρίζα τους τις προσπάθειες εργαλειοποίησης του ανθρώπινου πόνου από τα κυκλώματα των διακινητών και, κυρίως, θα διασφαλίζει δίκαιο και μόνιμο επιμερισμό ευθυνών μεταξύ των κρατών μελών.

Michaela Šojdrová (PPE). – Paní předsedající, já bych chtěla v tuto chvíli zde veřejně poděkovat organizátorům závěrečné konference Evropského roku mládeže, která se konala minulý týden 6. prosince v Evropském parlamentu. Tuto konferenci společně organizovaly Evropská komise, Rada zastoupená českým předsednictvím a Evropský parlament. Důležité je, že se na organizaci podíleli mladí lidé. Sedm set mladých lidí zaplnilo Evropský parlament v Bruselu. Byla to ojedinělá akce a já doufám, že také příští rok, který je Rokem dovedností, bude v této tradici společné spolupráce Rady, Komise a Parlamentu pokračovat. Chci také poděkovat třiceti dětem ze základních uměleckých škol z České republiky, které na této konferenci vystoupily se svým hudebním vystoupením. Není to ojedinělá akce tohoto roku, ale závěrečná a významná.

Na závěr mi dovolte říci, že to, co jsme dnes tady slíbili, že vyšetříme korupci, která proběhla v Evropském parlamentu, také provedeme. Je to také náš závazek vůči mladým lidem a mladé generaci, které patří evropská budoucnost.

Stanislav Polčák (PPE). – Paní předsedající, Rusko je teroristický stát. Systematicky vraždí nevinné civilisty, unáší děti do Ruska, nechává miny, zaminovává celá velká území, bomby ničí majetky a také veřejnou infrastrukturu, je ničena úroda. Všechny mezinárodní zločiny Ruska budou vyšetřeny. A to je jednoznačný vzkaz do Ruska, který vyslovujeme již opakovaně na tomto plénu.

Nyní je však třeba se věnovat pomoci Ukrajině z hlediska energetické soustavy a její stability, aby měla alespoň náhrady pro svou energetickou síť. Musíme rychle nabídnout pomoc s velkými i malými generátory. Také přes velkou hranici, kterou s Ukrajinou máme, se snažit pomoci dodávat Ukrajině energii, kterou by měla alespoň zčásti hradit Evropská unie. Ukrajinci i přes svůj hrdinný odpor nyní pociťují chlad, strádání, nedostatek energií pro svůj život. Nesmíme je opustit. Jejich vítězství je i naše vítězství.

Juan Fernando López Aguilar (S&D). – Señora presidenta, la injustificable guerra de agresión de la Rusia de Putin contra Ucrania ha exigido de este Parlamento Europeo la adopción de todo un conjunto de medidas, tanto para evitar la impunidad de los crímenes de guerra como para adoptar medidas restrictivas contra Rusia, sus agentes y sus cómplices, incluida la prohibición de que los barcos rusos recalen en los puertos de la Unión Europea.

Pero entra dentro de lo razonable que la Comisión deba evaluar, en la medida en que el conflicto se prolonga, la sostenibilidad de aquellas medidas que pueden repercutir en un empeoramiento de la crisis de suministros y de la crisis alimentaria, particularmente en los países más necesitados de suministro alimentario, como son, naturalmente, los del continente africano. Me refiero a las medidas relativas a los puertos estratégicos —como el Puerto de Las Palmas— que, en la medida en que los barcos rusos —que suministran pesca pelágica que contribuye a la dieta alimentaria del continente africano— ya no pueden ni recalar, ni pertrecharse, ni, menos aún, repararse en puertos estratégicos como dicho puerto, para suministrar alimento a África, pueden, por tanto, incrementar la crisis alimentaria en el continente africano.

Es bueno que la Comisión evalúe las consecuencias de sus decisiones para que seamos capaces de modularlas, en su caso, a fin de evitar que la crisis alimentaria en el continente africano continúe empeorando.

Tudor Ciuhodaru (S&D). – Doamnă președintă, este incredibil și impardonabil că votul acestui Parlament nu contează. Am votat de două ori în acest Parlament pentru aderarea României la Schengen și un vot dat în altă parte a făcut ca lucrurile să ia altă direcție. Lucrurile acestea trebuie schimbate.

Onorată Comisie, onorat Consiliu, vreau ca românii să nu mai fie considerați cetățeni europeni de mâna a doua și România să fie considerată o țară la nivel european. Niciodată nu am suferit o astfel de nedreptate, dată în momentul în care a fost votul împotriva aderării României la Schengen. Este incredibil, este incorect și nedrept ca unii să fie mai egali ca alții și lucrurile acestea trebuie să înceteze. Vreau să fim tratați ca francezii, englezii, olandezii și austriecii.

Montag, 12. Dezember 2022

Onorată Comisie, onorat Consiliu, unitatea și solidaritatea înseamnă și măsuri concrete și vă cer, vreau, vă solicit și vreau să mă întorc acasă spunând că s-au realizat trei lucruri extrem de importante: să constatați încă o dată că îndeplinim toate condițiile, să facem un calendar foarte clar privind aderarea României la Schengen și să declanșați acele proceduri pe care le-ați declanșat de fiecare dată, de infringement, de sancționare a celor care nu respectă tratatele de funcționare a Uniunii Europene.

Acest vot împotriva României a fost de fapt o fractură gravă împotriva unității și solidarității europene, și onorată Comisie, onorat Consiliu, am fost extrem de solidari în ceea ce privește toate crizele europene. Dacă vreți să fim aproape în continuare, țineți cont că românii și România merită mai mult, inclusiv schimbarea tratatelor la nivel european.

Nicolae Ștefănuță (Renew). – Doamnă președintă, românilor le-au fost promise opt spitale regionale noi, care apoi s-au transformat în trei. Astăzi, zero vor fi finanțate din PNRR, pentru că autoritățile nu și-au făcut treaba. Guvernul, în realitate, nu vrea să construiască niciun spital nou din PNRR, ci doar să cârpească spitalele existente.

Sibienii au fost uitați complet. Avem un proiect de spital județean, dar nu avem aprobare politică de la Guvern. Dacă nu vom avea această aprobare, sibienii nu vor putea să construiască un alt spital în următorii 10 ani, pentru că nu vor avea bani de unde.

Așa că, domnule Ciucă, domnule Rafila, domnule Boloș, puneți bani europeni și pentru construcția unui spital nou la Sibiu. Sibienii nu pot să fie țapul ispășitor al boșilor din București.

Banca Europeană de Investiții nu poate să finanțeze spitalul dacă Guvernul nu aprobă măcar jumătate din finanțarea europeană. Dați sibienilor un spital nou.

Billy Kelleher (Renew). – Madam President, a total of 187 medicines used by Irish patients are currently in shortage or out of stock, according to the list maintained by the Health Products Regulatory Authority, including 11 that feature on the World Health Organisation's critical medicines list. This is a very serious issue for doctors and pharmacies, but above all else for the people who depend on these medicines.

One of the main challenges Ireland faces is that of these 187 medicines, 40% are provided by a single supplier, meaning that pharmacies have no alternative to purchase from elsewhere. This is compared to the EU average of 25%. For example, two very important antibiotics, amoxicillin and penicillin, are on this list. Ireland is currently facing some of the very serious challenges with regard to Strep A, and this needs to be addressed.

We need a solution that works for all Member States. We need to move to a system whereby Member States have a single unified process of approvals, authorisation, purchasing and reimbursement. I appreciate that Member States have varying purchasing abilities, but our current system actually enables certain pharmaceutical companies to pick and choose those who they supply first, depending on the price they are willing to pay

Barry Andrews (Renew). – Madam President, since the European Parliament issued its report on Pegasus last month, many people are stunned at the depth of the scandal. Since then, there have been two further reports on Predator software, published by Lighthouse Reports and the New York Times. Most Irish people were shocked to learn that an Irish holding company, Thalestris, was responsible for surveillance spyware used against MEPs and journalists and, incredibly, sold to the successor of the Janjaweed in Sudan, which committed so many war crimes.

This latest information was contained in a report in the Currency, an Irish online publisher. Thalestris should be investigated by both the Irish Revenue and the Office of the Director of Corporate Enforcement, and I would also encourage the Irish Parliament to investigate links between Ireland and the surveillance spyware industry.

Ireland should not become a haven for companies involved in violations of human rights around the world and the provision of corporate services to those companies. Sadly, the Irish Government has shared very little information with the European Parliament inquiry and has continued to assert national security when asked if it uses this spyware.

Vlad-Marius Botoș (Renew). – Doamna președintă, vă mulțumesc, dragi colegi, că ați votat astăzi ca mâine pe ordinea de zi să avem o dezbatere despre votul de veto pe care l-a dat Austria împotriva țării mele.

Este un vot nedrept și umilitor pentru un popor care până acum 5 zile nu era eurosceptic și era un popor care susținea foarte mult Uniunea Europeană. Și mă bucur și o salut pe doamna comisar Vălean, prezentă aici în sală. Un popor care crede în spiritul european, crede în valorile europene, iar ceea ce a făcut guvernul austriac, repet, a umilit aceste valori.

Noi vom duce mai departe lupta noastră, nu ne vom resemna. Iar din nou țin să vă mulțumesc că voi, europarlamentarii din toate cele 26 de țări fără România, susțineți acest proiect, România în Schengen.

Jean-Paul Garraud (ID). – Madame la Présidente, en janvier 2021, la France a fermé un grand nombre de ses points de passage frontaliers avec l'Espagne, dont le col de Banyuls, au motif de menace terroriste, d'immigration incontrôlée et de risques sanitaires dus à l'épidémie de COVID-19. Trois gros rochers ont été disposés en travers de la route du col. Évidemment, cela n'empêche ni l'épidémie, ni l'immigration illégale, ni le terrorisme.

La situation est absurde et surréaliste. Elle défie le simple bon sens. De nombreux acteurs locaux se sont mobilisés, car cette fermeture n'embête qu'une seule catégorie de personnes: les gens honnêtes. De plus, cette fermeture empêche les éventuels secours de traverser, par exemple pour lutter contre les incendies, et elle empêche aussi beaucoup de travailleurs saisonniers, surtout pour la vigne, d'aller et de venir dans ces territoires.

Maîtriser les frontières d'un pays, ce n'est pas disposer trois cailloux au milieu d'une route. Je demande donc que la France rétablisse un réel contrôle à ce niveau de la frontière, sans que cela affecte négativement toute une vie locale déjà en grande difficulté. Le président de la République française, en déplacement au Perthus, avait assuré de l'octroi de renforts de police pour garder nos frontières. Il n'y a pas eu de policiers, mais des rochers à la place. Nous voulons de réels contrôles qui n'empêchent en rien la vie locale. C'est tout à fait possible. Il suffit qu'à Paris, ce petit bout des Pyrénées catalanes soit enfin considéré.

Thierry Mariani (ID). – Madame la Présidente, nous sommes tous en train de détruire un pays avec la meilleure conscience. J'ai été la semaine dernière avec une délégation de députés français au Liban; tous les partis, toutes les confessions et tous les acteurs nous ont transmis le même message, qu'ils soient chiites, sunnites ou chrétiens. Aujourd'hui, près de 2 millions de réfugiés syriens sont présents dans un pays qui compte 6 millions de personnes. C'est un fardeau intolérable. Imaginez demain qu'en France nous recevions 22 millions de réfugiés. Aujourd'hui, au Liban, les écoles sont en train d'exploser, les hôpitaux ne s'en sortent plus et tout cela est aggravé par la crise économique.

Il faut agir vite et selon une feuille de route très simple. Aujourd'hui, il suffit d'accepter que les réfugiés syriens retournent dans leur pays. L'Union européenne et les Occidentaux refusent de reconnaître leur échec en Syrie, et nous faisons en sorte qu'un pays maintienne le tiers de sa population sur son territoire alors qu'il n'en a pas les moyens. Madame la Présidente, mes chers collègues, dans quelques mois, il sera trop tard: plus d'écoles ni d'hôpitaux dans un pays que nous sommes, je le répète, en train d'assassiner. Il suffit tout simplement d'autoriser les ONG à accompagner les réfugiés en Syrie, pour eux-mêmes et pour sauver le Liban.

Gianantonio Da Re (ID). – Signora Presidente, onorevoli colleghi, l'articolo 80 del trattato dell'Unione europea relativo alle politiche sull'immigrazione e all'asilo stabilisce che le politiche dell'Unione sono governate dal principio della solidarietà, dell'equa ripartizione della responsabilità tra gli Stati membri, anche sul piano finanziario.

Secondo gli ultimi dati di Frontex, nei primi dieci mesi del 2022 si sono registrati oltre 280 000 attraversamenti irregolari delle frontiere verso l'Europa, un valore in aumento del 77 % rispetto al 2021.

Nell'affrontare l'emergenza migratoria l'Italia è stata lasciata completamente sola e la tanto declamata solidarietà europea è rimasta purtroppo solo sulla carta.

Basta promesse dall'Unione europea, pretendiamo risposte rapide, una gestione condivisa sui flussi migratori e attendiamo soluzioni comuni. L'Italia non può essere il campo profughi dell'Europa e soltanto quello.

Gunnar Beck (ID). – Frau Präsidentin! Das deutsche Verfassungsgericht erklärte letzte Woche das NextGenerationEU-Paket und die Aufnahme von sagenhaften mehr als 800 Milliarden Euro Schulden für EU-vertragskonform – dies, obwohl gleich drei Vertragsartikel der EU gemeinsame Schuldenaufnahme untersagen: Artikel 310, 311 und 125. Immerhin, die Richter monierten, fast 300 Milliarden Euro seien von der Kommission zweckentfremdet und nicht für den Post-Covid-Wiederaufbau, sondern die Finanzierung der unsinnigen Klimarettung missbraucht worden.

Doch solange Rettungsprogramme im Europäischen Rat einstimmig verabschiedet würden und im Umfang und Zeit begrenzt seien, sei Missbrauch kein Problem. So liefert das Gericht gleich eine Blaupause für weitere Schuldenprogramme. Hätten die Richter geurteilt, Recht sei nur die Fortsetzung der Politik mit anderen Mitteln, so wären sie immerhin ehrlich.

Charlie Weimers (ECR). – Fru talman! Nyligen kunde vi läsa att 52 procent av franska lärare idkar självcensur för att inte stöta sig med religiösa elever. När självcensuren breder ut sig har islamisterna uppnått ett viktigt delmål på vägen till lagstadgad censur.

I Sverige har vi ett islamistiskt parti representerat i flera kommuner som driver blasfemilagar. Det borde skrämma slag på varenda frihetsälskande européer. Men under en rad år har EU stöttat islamister och därmed aktivt undergrävt vårt europeiska sätt att leva. Ungdomsorganisationer med kopplingar till Muslimska brödraskapet har erhållit miljoner. Föreningen mot islamofobi i Frankrike, som upplöstes av regeringen efter mordet på läraren Samuel Paty, har fått bidrag. Islamiska universitetet i Gaza, viktig symbol för Hamas, fick över fem miljoner kr från EU 2019.

Efter mina propåer har bidragen till Islamiska universitetet stoppats. Medlemsstaterna utbyter erfarenheter i rådet för att tackla islamism och kommissionen har fått påbud att skärpa kraven för att stoppa bidragen. Det är på tiden. Om friheten ska ha en plats i Europa måste islamismen tryckas tillbaka.

Johan Nissinen (ECR). – Fru talman! Sverigedemokraterna varnade redan från början att coronafonden inte var en temporär åtgärd. För med EU är ingenting temporärt. Ger man ett finger till EU så tar de hela handen. För varje kris ser EU till att skaffa mer makt. Trots att delar av coronafondens miljarder inte har delats ut ännu pratar man redan om en ny fond, den så kallade suveränitetsfonden. Det gick fortare än vad Sverigedemokraterna trodde.

Det här är inte hållbart. EU måste sluta vara en bidragsunion, som slösar med skattebetalarnas pengar, och bli en mer hållbar, konkurrenskraftig union, där viktiga reformer faktiskt genomförs i praktiken. Makten måste tillbaka till medlemsstaterna och EU måste sluta tänka att lösningen på alla problem är mer makt till Bryssel. Det är dags att vi stoppar slöseriet och centraliseringen en gång för alla.

Michiel Hoogeveen (ECR). – Voorzitter, het gebouw van het Europees Parlement in Brussel heeft een stabiliteitsprobleem en verzakt – letterlijk – in het moeras. Vorige week werden de verbouwplannen gepresenteerd. Een megalomaan bouwwerk van glas en staal moet het Parlement uit het moeras trekken en meer allure geven. Kosten: makkelijk 1 miljard EUR.

Voorzitter, wij staan nu in Straatsburg, officiële zetel van het Europees Parlement, in een state-of-the-art-parlementsgebouw, van alle gemakken voorzien. Het wordt enkel 48 dagen per jaar gebruikt. De rest van het jaar is het hier leeg. Alsof het verhuiscircus van 200 miljoen EUR per jaar niet genoeg is, wil het Europees Parlement dus nog eens 1 miljard - EUR uitgeven aan een gebouw 450 kilometer verderop.

Voorzitter, dit slaat nergens op. Daarom mijn voorstel: verhuis het Europees Parlement permanent naar Straatsburg. Bespaar miljarden aan belastinggeld en schenk de Brusselse gebouwen terug aan het moeras.

Cristian Terheș (ECR). – Madam President, I publicly demand that the EPP Chair, Mr Manfred Weber, immediately and unconditionally expel from the EPP the party led by the Austrian Chancellor Karl Nehammer.

On 8 December 2022, Austria voted to abusively block the entrance of Romania and Bulgaria in Schengen, even though both countries met all the requirements to join this area. We were not and we are not asking for privileges, not for mercy from anyone, including Austria.

Romania gained its national right to be part of Schengen after paying a heavy and expensive price. From the Romanian taxpayers' money, we are protecting and defending the borders from illegal immigration so not only us but also other countries like Austria will be protected and safe.

Romania respects the obligation of the Schengen acquis and for over 11 years the Commission and the European Parliament stated in multiple reports and resolutions that is fully prepared to join Schengen. Despite all this – the undeniable facts – the Austrian Chancellor decided to abusively violate Romania's right to join Schengen so he can gain political points. This is simply unacceptable.

Mr Weber, if you are a man of your word and care about European solidarity, I publicly urge you to expel from your party the party of the Austrian Chancellor.

Manu Pineda (The Left). – Señora presidenta, hoy comienza una audiencia probatoria que pretende evaluar si un diplomático goza o no de inmunidad diplomática. Es decir, comienza un desprecio más de los Estados Unidos a las normas internacionales y a la diplomacia como base de las relaciones internacionales.

El 12 de junio de 2020, los Estados Unidos maniobraron para que Cabo Verde detuviese al diplomático venezolano Alex Saab. Un diplomático que, a pesar de la guerra económica que sufre Venezuela, consiguió que su pueblo tuviese medicamentos y combustibles durante la pandemia, cuando más necesario era. Una persona que fue nombrada miembro pleno de la Mesa Social hace más de un año. En respuesta a lo cual los Estados Unidos lo trajeron ilegalmente a su territorio.

Hoy comienza su juicio y nos atañe a todos los países: es un juicio que supone la violación del Derecho internacional y dejar en papel mojado la Convención de Viena sobre Relaciones Diplomáticas. No podemos permitírnoslo, y menos en el contexto actual de auge del belicismo.

Desde la solemnidad de este Pleno del Parlamento Europeo defendemos la diplomacia como camino para la paz y exigimos la inmediata liberación del diplomático Alex Nain Saab.

Clare Daly (The Left). – Madam President, last Thursday, we attended the appeal hearing in Lesvos of two Afghan refugees, Amir Zahiri and Akif Razuli, against a 50-year sentence given to them for smuggling when they were simply passengers on a boat from Turkey seeking refuge in Greece. A boat which the Greek coastguard attempted to push back and damaged; a journey which ended with them spending almost three years in jail for a crime which the court admitted there was no evidence against Razuli and barely a clear against Zahiri. An appeal which took four visits to the court, including a delay of eight months at one stage to get a coast guard present, and in the end he didn't show up at all.

So while I welcome the fact that they are now free, it is an outrage that migrants continue to be criminalised and tortured in Greece. It's against the UN protocol against smuggling. Thousands upon thousands remain in Greek jails for the so-called crime of 'boat driving'. This is an abomination. When is the EU going to call Greece to account and respect and observe fundamental rights? This is your Europe. This is your values.

Mick Wallace (The Left). – Madam President, in Latin America in the past week we've seen politically motivated lawfare against Argentina Vice-President Cristina Fernandez and a right-wing coup against the president of Peru, Pedro Castillo. The EU shows its true colours in the face of these events, just as it did when they supported the illegal military coup against Morales in 2019 in Bolivia. If the leader had been overthrown, convicted or imprisoned as an indigenous or a socialist, that means order has been restored and lies are repeated to justify the anti-democratic actions. If the leader losing out is white, a capitalist oligarch, a far-right racist or a descendant of colonialists and dictators, the EU is up in arms. Crushing sanctions must be imposed, assets frozen and calls for new elections abound. The corrupt white settler elites and cronies of the political west must be kept in power at all costs. The voice of the people is only respected when it suits. European leaders and capitalist elites do not seem to give a damn about democracy.

Montag, 12. Dezember 2022

João Pimenta Lopes (The Left). – Senhora Presidente, Alex Saab foi ilegalmente detido em Cabo Verde, em junho de 2020 e posteriormente transferido para os Estados Unidos em outubro de 2021. Esta detenção, que dura há mais de dois anos numa clara violação do direito internacional, constitui mais um exemplo da ação de ingerência, de desestabilização, pressão e chantagem dos Estados Unidos contra a República Bolivariana da Venezuela e o seu povo. Uma ação onde também se incluem as sanções ilegais e unilaterais, ou o dito Plano de Transição Democrática para a Venezuela promovido pelos Estados Unidos, que constituem atos de frontal desrespeito pelos direitos e a soberania do povo venezuelano.

E porque foi detido Alex Saab? Por ser um diplomata que procurava assegurar as condições para o desenvolvimento da Venezuela e para a melhoria das condições de vida dos venezuelanos que as sanções dos Estados Unidos visam condicionar e impedir.

Daqui expressamos a nossa solidariedade para com a Venezuela e o seu povo, que defende a sua soberania e independência, e exigimos a libertação de Alex Saab e o fim da política de ingerência e desestabilização por parte dos Estados Unidos.

Ádám Kósa (NI). – Elnök Asszony! Minden jel arra utal, hogy a demokratikus választások eddigi legdurvább befolyásolási kísérletét vitte végbe a magyar ellenzéki pártok koalíciója, amely több milliárd forint kampánytámogatást kapott külföldről az áprilisi választások előtt. A háromszorosát annak, amit demokratikus és átlátható körülmények között a magyar államtól kapnak. Ezek a dollárok beépültek a baloldal politikájába, benne vannak a nyilatkozataikban, felszólalásaikban, az Önöknek adott tájékoztatásaikban.

Torz képet festenek hazámról, azok érdekében, akik ezekkel a dollárokkal igyekeznek szavazatokat venni. Ideje szembenézni vele, hogy Önök között sokan a magyar dollárbaloldal képviselőinek hazugságait hallgatva zengték abszurd vádjaikat a magyar kormány munkájáról. Pedig a most kitört európai parlamenti korrupciós botrány is megmutatta, hogy a baloldal megvásárolható, legyen az magyar vagy európai.

Dino Giarrusso (NI). – Signora Presidente, onorevoli colleghi, quest'Aula, questa istituzione costa miliardi di euro ogni anno ai cittadini europei e miliardi di speranze, di desideri, di diverse visioni del futuro dipendono anche dal nostro lavoro e da come onoriamo la fiducia che ci è stata accordata.

Le notizie di questi giorni, i sacchi di soldi nascosti in casa come nelle peggiori commediaccie e la totale mancanza di rispetto verso i cittadini europei che lobbisti di paesi terzi, insieme a deputati infedeli, ex deputati, collaboratori e sindacalisti hanno spudoratamente dimostrato, sono una delle pagine più tristi e schifose di questa istituzione.

La disonestà di alcuni non può distruggere il buon lavoro di altri, è vero, ma qui ci sono 450 milioni di europei da difendere, tutelare, rispettare.

Dimostriamo di essere superiori a questo schifo con i fatti e creiamo sistemi anticorruzione più efficienti, altrimenti questo palazzo, questa istituzione e, dunque, tutto il nostro lavoro non avrà più senso.

Presidente. – Con questo si conclude il punto.

La seduta è tolta e riprenderà domani, martedì 13 dicembre 2022, alle 9.00.

19. Tagesordnung der nächsten Sitzung

Presidente. – L'ordine del giorno è stato pubblicato ed è disponibile sul sito Internet del Parlamento europeo.

20. Genehmigung des Protokolls der laufenden Sitzung

Presidente. – Il processo verbale della presente seduta sarà sottoposto all'approvazione del Parlamento domani nel primo pomeriggio.

21. Schluss der Sitzung

(La seduta è tolta alle 22.58.)

Dienstag, 13. Dezember 2022

AUSFÜHRLICHE SITZUNGSBERICHTE VOM 13. DEZEMBER 2022

(2023/C 292/02)

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Dienstag, 13. Dezember 2022

AUSFÜHRLICHE SITZUNGSBERICHTE VOM 13. DEZEMBER 2022

VORSITZ: KATARINA BARLEY

Präsidentin

1. Eröffnung der Sitzung

(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. Änderung der Richtlinie über Energie aus erneuerbaren Quellen, der Richtlinie über die Gesamtenergieeffizienz von Gebäuden und der Richtlinie zur Energieeffizienz (REPowerEU) (Aussprache)

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 wegwollen, wenn wir von den einseitigen Abhängigkeiten wegwollen, 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.

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 eindeutigere 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.

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.

Maria Spyraki, *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 CO_2 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' sale 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.

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. Mitteilung der Präsidentin

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.

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. Änderung der Richtlinie über Energie aus erneuerbaren Quellen, der Richtlinie über die Gesamtenergieeffizienz von Gebäuden und der Richtlinie zur Energieeffizienz (REPowerEU) (Fortsetzung der Aussprache)

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 prvé 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.

Dienstag, 13. Dezember 2022

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 aveam 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.

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 reinzuholzen. 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: Lünersee 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 Komisarzu! 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 zmienią. 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.

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 αειφόρο 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 έκθεσης 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 Buşoi (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, criterii 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 ambițioasele ținte climatice.

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 показа 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 přečistění vtlačovat 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.

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 energetykę 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.

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.

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 Uachtaráin*, 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.

Ydinkehittämisalueen 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 ydinkehittämisalueella.

Komissaari Timmermans sanoo, että sitä voi muutenkin rakentaa. Voi, mutta siihen tarvitaan lupia. Tarvitaan kaavoituspäätöksiä. Tarvitaan monenlaisia ympäristölupia ja tarvitaan rakennuslupia. Myös bioenergian käytön edistämisessä nopeutetut 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.

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 inadmisible 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 Ukrajine, 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 znižovanie 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 povoľovacie 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 riešení 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-

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 birocrația. Sunt extrem de costisitoare, până la urmă, toată autorizațiile și toată birocrația.

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.

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 ydinkehittämisalueita, 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 hinbekommen werden.

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 irgendwelche 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 ilmastosopimuksen tavoitteet olisivat saavutettavissa. Uusiutuviin energiamuotoihin siirtyminen nopeasti on myös välttämätön osa Euroopan irrottautumista 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 nopeutetumpaa prosessia. On kuitenkin myös tärkeää huomioida mihin uusia energialaitoksia rakennetaan, minkä vuoksi on hienoa, että Euroopan parlamentti tuki sitä, ettei Natura 2000- luonnonsuojelualueita tai ekologisia 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 ydinkehittämisalueille. 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.)

PRESIDENZA: ROBERTA METSOLA

President

5. Wiederaufnahme der Sitzung

(The sitting resumed at 10:45)

6. Was Europa ausmacht – Aussprache mit dem Ministerpräsidenten Sloweniens, Robert Golob (Aussprache)

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 CO_2-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.

Dienstag, 13. Dezember 2022

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 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.

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.

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 državljankam in državljanom Ukrajine in Moldavije. In zato pozivam, da se na tem procesu ne zaustavljamo.

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 sodržavljane 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.

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.

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 Slovénie. 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 Slovénie 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 Slovénie 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.

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, uspjet ćete 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 ministrice 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.

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, werkkrachten 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?

Dienstag, 13. Dezember 2022

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 predsednica, spoštovani predsednik vlade doktor Robert Golob. Z zanimanjem sem prisluhnila vašemu govoru, kjer ste izpostavili energetsko 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 poslancem zlagali.

Vaša pretekla in sedanja vloga v povezavi z energetskimi posli je polna neodgovorjenih 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 afere in neučinkovitost vaše vlade, so dnevno podvrženi grožnjam in pritiskom. Očitno je, da pri vodenju uporabljate zelo avtokratske 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 inštitucijah 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 napori predsednika republike, ministrice za zunanje zadeve ter nas v Evropskem parlamentu obrodile prve sadove.

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.

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 oczywistym, że jeżeli odwróciły 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.

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.

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 energetsko 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 vzpostavitvijo 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 vainotuin 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.

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 not 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 inváziа 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 triezvy až opatrný 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 Slovénie 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 Slovénie 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.

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. Wiederaufnahme der Sitzung

(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 dovolte 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. Abstimmungsstunde

President. – We will now proceed to the vote.

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

8.1. Vorzeitige Beendigung der Amtszeit einer Vizepräsidentin (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. Instrument zur Unterstützung der Ukraine im Jahr 2023 (Makrofinanzhilfe+) (C9-0373/2022) (Abstimmung)

8.3. Mitteilung im Rahmen des Systems zur Verrechnung und Reduzierung von Kohlenstoffdioxid für die internationale Luftfahrt (CORSIA) (A9-0145/2022 - Sunčana Glavak) (Abstimmung)

8.4. Verkehr: Aufhebung der Verordnung (EWG) Nr. 1108/70 des Rates und der Verordnung (EG) Nr. 851/2006 der Kommission (A9-0286/2022 - Roman Haider) (Abstimmung)

8.5. Zivilluftfahrt: Aufhebung der Richtlinie 89/629/EWG des Rates (A9-0287/2022 - Karima Delli) (Abstimmung)

8.6. Zusammenarbeit der Verwaltungsbehörden auf dem Gebiet der Verbrauchsteuern (A9-0276/2022 - Irene Tinagli) (Abstimmung)

8.7. Anwendung der Artikel 93, 107 und 108 AEUV auf bestimmte Gruppen staatlicher Beihilfen im Eisenbahn-, Binnenschiffs- und multimodalen Verkehr (A9-0285/2022 - Eva Maria Poptcheva) (Abstimmung)

8.8. Einwand gemäß Artikel 112 Absätze 2 und 3 GO: genetisch veränderte Sojabohnen der Sorte A5547-127 (ACS-GMØØ6-4) (B9-0548/2022) (Abstimmung)

8.9. Einwand gemäß Artikel 112 Absätze 2 und 3 GO: Biozidproduktfamilie „CMIT/MIT SOLVENT BASED“ (B9-0549/2022) (Abstimmung)

Dienstag, 13. Dezember 2022

8.10. Gleiche Rechte für Menschen mit Behinderungen (A9-0284/2022 - Anne-Sophie Pelletier) (Abstimmung)

8.11. Eine langfristige Vision für die ländlichen Gebiete der EU (A9-0269/2022 - Isabel Carvalhais) (Abstimmung)

— *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. Aktionsplan zur Förderung des Schienenpersonenverkehrs auf Fern- und grenzüberschreitenden Strecken (A9-0242/2022 - Annalisa Tardino) (Abstimmung)

8.13. Digitale Kluft: die durch die Digitalisierung verursachten sozialen Unterschiede (B9-0550/2022) (Abstimmung)

President. – That concludes the vote.

(The sitting was suspended briefly.)

PRESIDÊNCIA: PEDRO SILVA PEREIRA

Vice-Presidente

9. Wiederaufnahme der Sitzung

(A sessão é reiniciada às 12h27.)

10. Umsetzung der neuen europäischen Agenda für Kultur und der Strategie der EU für internationale Kulturbeziehungen (Aussprache)

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).

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 devrons 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 réglementer 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!

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.

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.

J'aimerais à présent mentionner la dimension économique de nos actions en matière de culture. Vous avez raison, Madame la Rapporteure: 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.

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.

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. Pamiętajmy 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.

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 Γεωργούλης, *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 CulturEU, 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 Fritzon (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.

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 πειθούς, 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 Rapporteure, 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.

Michaela Šojdrová (PPE). – Pane předsedající, paní komisařko, pane ministře, dovolte, abych 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 Kyrtsos (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 hemiciclo.

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.

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.

Peter Pollák (PPE). – Vážený 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.

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.

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. Die Notwendigkeit eines eigenen Haushalts, um die Europäische Garantie für Kinder Wirklichkeit werden zu lassen – eine Dringlichkeit in Zeiten einer Energie- und Lebensmittelkrise (Aussprache)

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.

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 well 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.

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 1er 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 zaklęty 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.

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.

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 napĺňať 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.

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.

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 wpycha dzieci w wykluczone społecznie w zaklęty 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, wieħed minn kull erbat itfal madwar l-Unjoni Ewropa kollha jinsab f'riskju tal-povertà, f'riskju ta' esklużjoni soċjali. Il-pandemija kompliet tiggrava s-sitwazzjoni u żiedet 150 miljun tifel u tifla oħra f'riskju 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 qegħdin jintlaqtu b'mod negattiv.

Dawn l-istatistiki huma xokkanti u ser iħallu effett fit-tul ħafna fuq it-tfal tagħna. U għalhekk huwa importanti li nkomplu niġġieldu għall-garanzija taż-żgħażagħ. Huwa inutli, u nkunu ipokriti, jekk nibqgħu nitkellmu fuq il-garanzija taż-żgħażagħ u mbagħad ma nagħtux ir-riżorsi kollha li hemm bżonn sabiex din il-garanzija tkun tista' titħaddem kemm fuq livell Ewropew imma wkoll fuq livell tal-Istati Membri tagħna.

Ma jagħmilx sens illi għadna f'seduta waħda wara l-oħra, f'dibattitu wieħed wara l-ieħor, nitkellmu fuq il-bżonn ta' dawn l-20 biljun euro biex din il-garanzija nkunu nistgħu nistartjawha - tibda taħdem. Għoxrin biljun euro li huma importanti ħafna illi jiġu mill-Fond tal-MFF illi jerġa' jitħaddem 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.

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 wydaliśmy walkę mafiom vatowskim, 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.

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 Fritzon (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.

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, werte 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.

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 turtingiausių pasaulio regionų, yra nepriimtina ir jis vis dar auga. Covid pandemija, karas Ukrainoje parodė, kad sistemos, skirtos panaikinti vaikų skurdą, nėra tokios stiprios, kaip mes galvojome, kad jos veiks. Ir todėl tenka tik apgailestauti 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). – Vážený pán predsedajúci, ambiciózny 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 viacrozmernú 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 viacrozmerného systémového riešenia budúcnosti našich detí.

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.

Predsedajúci. – 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.

(Rokovanie bolo prerušené o 14.51 h.)

VORSITZ: OTHMAR KARAS

Vizepräsident

12. Wiederaufnahme der Sitzung

(Die Sitzung wird um 15.03 Uhr wieder aufgenommen.)

13. Genehmigung des Protokolls der vorangegangenen Sitzung

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. Fragestunde mit Anfragen an die Kommission – „Schutz von strategischer Infrastruktur vor dem Einfluss Chinas“

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?

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.

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?

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 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.

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, spuneați 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.

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.

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?

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.

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.

Dienstag, 13. Dezember 2022

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.

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.

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.

15. Verdacht der Korruption aus Katar und die umfassendere Notwendigkeit von Transparenz und Rechenschaftspflicht in den Organen der EU (Aussprache) (Aussprache)

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.

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.

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.

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 écrouée, 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.

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

podpredseda

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.

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.

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.

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 μαχαίρωμα» 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 κατηγορουμένη. 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.

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.

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 bronieniu 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 proposions de réduire les revenus des députés, vous nous répondiez: «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 straffeloosheid: daar spreekt Transparency International over. Met die hoge lonen verliezen parlementsleden 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 hagymázas szólamai csupán ócska politikai hazugságok. Kaili, Barley, Freund, Verhofstadt vagy Sarvamaa képviselők átláthatóság meg ellenőrizhetőség melletti szövegei csupán a brüsszeli korrupció elfedését szolgálják.

A rabló kiáltott pandúrért. A képmutatás netovábbja ugyanis, hogy önök politikai hazugságokra alapozva napi rendszerességgel 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 korruption 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?

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 europarlamendi 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, ανακαλύπτατε 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.

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.

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 λομπίστας. 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.

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.

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 Καϊλή, 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 Καϊλή. 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.

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.

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, Antikorruption, 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 einstehen. 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 *sportswashing*, 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 amadoue 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 Mejzie, o respiratorach, zapomnieli o wyborach kopertowych w Polsce. Kto wtedy poniósł odpowiedzialność? Uczcie się od Unii, uczcie się, jak reaguje się na łamanie prawa. Zero tolerancji dla korupcji, zero tolerancji dla łamania prawa.

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. He 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.

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.

Predsedajúci. – 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. Der aktuelle Beschluss des Rates (Justiz und Inneres) zum Beitritt zum Schengen-Raum (Aussprache)

Predsedajúci. – 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.

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.

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.

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.

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 megfékezése 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.

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 Кючюк (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.

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 Cioloș (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 sfâșie 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 полицаи 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.

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 Balaš, 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.

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 civilizat 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 ?

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 austriecilor.

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.

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.

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 obosit 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.

(Vorbitoarea 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 dânșii 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.

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 austriecilor, 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 dumnea-voastră. 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.

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 заклеймява 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 ați 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 koristi 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 Balaš ați 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. Ați 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.

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 beigas.)

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.

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.

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 težko posledice. Temu se moramo nujno upreti.

17. Zukunftsaussichten der Zweistaatenlösung für Israel und Palästina (Aussprache)

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.

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 rekent 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.

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 77e 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.

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 financiado 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 άθλιες 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.

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 fredsvenner 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.

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 conivência e cumplicidade, contribui, pela omissão, para o agravamento da política israelita que visa impedir a concretização dos direitos inalienáveis do povo palestiniano, 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 palestinianos detidos em prisões israelitas. Toda a solidariedade para com a luta do povo palestiniano.

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.

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.

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. Ympärysvalloista 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 antisemitismiä. On äärivasemmistossa, on äärioikeistossa, mutta ihan myös tavallisesta vasemmistosta löytyy antisemitismiä, 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.

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 bekritiseren 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.

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 palestinianos dependem da ajuda humanitária. Mais de metade vive em pobreza e sem assistência médica. 80% dos jovens estão desempregados. Há 47 000 presos políticos palestinianos. 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.

Dienstag, 13. Dezember 2022

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, Bahréin, 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 manichéisme. 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

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?

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.

18. Türkische Luftangriffe auf Nordsyrien und die Region Kurdistan-Irak (Aussprache)

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.

Dienstag, 13. Dezember 2022

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.

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-il 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.

Dienstag, 13. Dezember 2022

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. Sejamos 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.

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, Istiklal 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.

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 Erdoğans 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.

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 αναχαιτίστηκε 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.

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 ΝΑΤΟ, 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. Jahresbericht über die Umsetzung des Assoziierungsabkommens zwischen der EU und Georgien (Aussprache)

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)

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.

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.

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.

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 blood-stained 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.

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, ypatingai kovoje 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 Saakašviliui 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 Terheș (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.

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 plėtros 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 senbuvių. Nuo 2016 m. Sakartvelas dėjo nemažai pastangų vykdyti ekonomines, žmogaus teisių ir antikorupcijos asociacijos sutartyje numatytas reformas ir buvo vienas pirmaujančių Rytų partnerystėje. Agresyviam 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, permąstykime, ar tikrai taip išplėsim draugų ratą, ar nepabloginam požiūrio į save, ar nedidinam euroskepticizmo? Politiniai įsipareigojimai vienų 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 Uachtaráin*, 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.

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 üldeesmärk. 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 püüdlevad 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 kõrvalehoidmist Venemaa Ukraina-vastase agressioonisõja tõttu kehtestatud rahvusvahelistest sanktsioonidest.

Dienstag, 13. Dezember 2022

20. Beziehungen zum ASEAN im Vorfeld des Gipfeltreffens zwischen der EU und dem ASEAN im Dezember 2022 (Aussprache)

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.

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.

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, rabaissant 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 mehr 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.

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.

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 Uachtaráin,* 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.

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 niesprowokowana 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 rosnąć. Nie zmarnujmy tej szansy.

21. Erklärungen zur Abstimmung

Die Präsidentin. – Als nächster Punkt der Tagesordnung folgen die Erklärungen zur Abstimmung.

21.1. Gleiche Rechte für Menschen mit Behinderungen (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. Vítam, 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 uznávanie štatútu osoby so zdravotným postihnutím naprieč všetkými členskými štátmi. Mnohé zdravotné postihnutia totiž nie sú na prvý pohľad viditeľné a automatické a uznávanie 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.

Dienstag, 13. Dezember 2022

21.2. Eine langfristige Vision für die ländlichen Gebiete der EU (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.

Miriam 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 vyľudňovaniu. Rovnako považujem za potrebnú podporu poľnohospodárov, ktorá je nielen dôležitá pre vidiecke oblasti, ale aj našu potravinovú bezpečnosť.

21.3. Aktionsplan zur Förderung des Schienenpersonenverkehrs auf Fern- und grenzüberschreitenden Strecken (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. Tagesordnung der nächsten Sitzung

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. Genehmigung des Protokolls der laufenden Sitzung

Die Präsidentin. – Das Protokoll dieser Sitzung wird dem Parlament morgen nach der Abstimmung zur Genehmigung vorgelegt.

24. Schluss der Sitzung

(Die Siztung wird um 22.15 Uhr geschlossen.)

Mittwoch, 14. Dezember 2022

AUSFÜHRLICHE SITZUNGSBERICHTE VOM 14. DEZEMBER 2022

(2023/C 292/03)

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Mittwoch, 14. Dezember 2022

AUSFÜHRLICHE SITZUNGSBERICHTE VOM 14. DEZEMBER 2022

PRESIDENZA: ROBERTA METSOLA

President

1. Eröffnung der Sitzung

(The sitting opened at 09:04)

2. Verhandlungen vor der ersten Lesung des Parlaments (Artikel 71 GO) (Weiterbehandlung)

President. – Good morning, everyone.

In relation to the decision by the LIBE Committee to enter into interinstitutional negotiations pursuant to Rule 71(1) on the European Union Drugs Agency file announced at the opening of the session on Monday 12 December, I have received no request for a vote from Members or political groups reaching at least the medium threshold. The committee may therefore start the negotiations.

3. Vorbereitung der Tagung des Europäischen Rates am 15. Dezember 2022 (Aussprache)

President. – The next item is the Council and Commission statements on the preparation of the European Council meeting of 15 December 2022 (2022/2943(RSP)).

Mikuláš Bek, *President-in-Office of the Council*. – Madam President, Madam President of the European Commission, honourable Members, tomorrow, leaders will meet in Brussels for the December European Council following a gathering today for the first commemorative EU-ASEAN summit. This is planned as a one-day European Council starting on Thursday morning with the usual exchange with the European Parliament President Metsola.

Leaders are expected to discuss the energy crisis and its consequences on households and the economy and Russia's escalating war of aggression against Ukraine. They will also discuss security and defence and are expected to have strategic discussions on Southern Neighbourhood and on transatlantic relations.

Russia is using winter as a weapon. The situation is serious in Ukraine, where Russia's ongoing campaign of systematic missile strikes against civilian targets, including energy infrastructure and utilities, inflicts terrible suffering on the Ukrainian people. Leaders will condemn these strikes as a crime for which there can be no impunity. And I expect it to call on Russia to immediately stop endangering the safety and security of civilian nuclear facilities.

Leaders are also expected to call for the provision of humanitarian and civil protection assistance to Ukraine to be intensified and for assistance in restoring Ukraine's critical infrastructure to help the country get through the winter, following up also on yesterday's special conference in Paris. This includes stepping up our support for Ukraine's most urgent infrastructure needs, as well as working with the private sector to provide a sustainable supply of priority equipment to Ukraine.

We also remain committed to providing political and military support to Ukraine. The European Peace Facility, as well as the newly launched EU Military Assistance Mission, are key tools in this respect. Ukraine's financial relief, resilience and long-term reconstruction will further be addressed by leaders. I would like to thank the European Parliament for your support and efforts to reach a timely solution on the MFA+ assistance file.

Leaders are also expected to speak about how to further increase collective pressure on Russia to end its war of aggression and to withdraw its troops from Ukraine. They will welcome the reinforcement of the EU's restrictive measures, including through the oil price cap. The aim is to have the new sanction package formally adopted ahead of the European Council, likely via a written procedure.

On energy and economy, the European Council will review progress in the implementation of its October conclusions. Steep energy prices touch all European citizens and businesses, and the issue has been very high on the agenda of the Czech Presidency of the Council. Leaders will continue to work on a coordinated approach to weather this crisis and minimise the social and economic fallout. They will discuss the impact of high energy prices and global developments on our industrial fabric and consider what should be done to maintain our global competitiveness and develop our technological leadership in the green transition whilst preserving the global level playing field.

Leaders will also take stock of progress on the latest energy measures proposed by the Commission and address the next steps. We need to make sure we continue to deal with the most immediate aspects of the current energy crisis, but also prepare for next winter and develop together a resilient system for the coming years. We must phase out our dependency on Russian energy exports, accelerate the green transition and ensure security of supply, which will require stepping up investment in infrastructure and interconnections, innovation, renewable energy and energy efficiency projects.

Turning to security and defence, leaders will follow up on their discussions in March and May, taking stock and providing further guidance on the implementation of the Strategic Compass and the Versailles Declaration. The EU is taking more responsibility for its own security and its capacity to act autonomously in defence matters. This includes strengthening the European defence and industrial base. Of course, the transatlantic bond, as reflected in the EU Strategic Compass and NATO's strategic concept, remains key.

The European Council is expected to call on the Council and the European Parliament to swiftly adopt the European Defence Industry Reinforcement through Common Procurement Act. The Council already adopted its position in early December under the lead of the Czech Presidency.

Regarding the EU's commitment to work with partners on security and defence, the European Council should underline the importance of instruments such as the European Peace Facility and is expected to welcome the agreement of the Council to increase EPF's overall financial ceiling by two billion into 2023.

The European Council will hold a strategic discussion on relations with the Southern Neighbourhood. Leaders are also expected to have a strategic discussion on transatlantic relations. On 6 December, the Western Balkans summit took place in Tirana. EU leaders and Western Balkans partners reconfirmed our strategic partnership. The Tirana Declaration reaffirms the EU's unequivocal support for the EU perspective of the Western Balkans. Yesterday, the Council adopted conclusions on the enlargement process, which the European Council is expected to endorse. As you can see, a very rich agenda.

Ursula von der Leyen, *President of the Commission*. – Madam President, Minister, honourable Members, it's exactly three years ago that I stood here in front of Parliament presenting the European Green Deal. Europe was the first continent to set out a path towards climate neutrality. Other countries had pledges. We had a plan.

Back then, we were concerned for our industry because of the unfair competition from heavy polluters. Today, only three years later, the competition we face has radically changed. A global green tech race has started. That is what we wanted. That is what we need. Because only when the most advanced economies compete for a net zero future will we reach our common goals: to limit global warming and to protect our children's future.

Mittwoch, 14. Dezember 2022

But this new competition environment also calls for a rethink on our side as to how we support our industry's green transition and strengthen its global leadership. That is what we will discuss tomorrow at the European Council and it is what I would like to focus on today.

Let me first look at the challenging situation our companies are facing today. Global gas supply remains tight because of Russia's war of aggression. Russia has cut 80% of its pipeline gas supply to the European Union in the last eight months. But we have been able to compensate. We have diversified. We're saving energy. We have boosted the rollout of renewables. We're skimming off the super profits of energy-producing companies to take the money to support vulnerable households and vulnerable businesses. We agreed to buy gas together and we put forward a market correction mechanism to limit the spikes in gas prices. Our stores are filled. So we are, as a result, safe for the winter.

I think we can be very proud of what we have achieved despite the Russian blackmail. And I would like to take the opportunity to thank the Czech Presidency for what you have achieved in the last six months. This is great and thank you very much for that. Yes, indeed, you deserve applause.

Yet all this work we have done comes at a cost. Cheap supplies of Russian energy were part of the business model of many European industries. That model has been shattered by Russia's attack on Ukraine and the inconvenient truth is that that model will not come back. The International Energy Agency has just reminded us that, in the absence of Russian gas, Europe now faces structurally higher fossil fuel import prices.

So the only sustainable way for our SMEs and our industries is the transition to renewable energy. Renewable energy is not only affordable, but it's, of course, also home-grown and it creates good jobs here in Europe. But this transition will not happen overnight and global competition is getting tougher. Just look at the United States. They have recently approved a significant investment plan which also sets standards for green tech sectors, the so-called Inflation Reduction Act.

And let us be very clear. First of all, supporting the clean transition is the right thing to do – if you do it right, in a transparent manner, in a spirit of cooperation and in a way that ensures a level playing field. So it should be a race against time and not a race against each other. It should be a race to the top and not a race to the bottom.

Yet there is a risk that the Inflation Reduction Act can lead to unfair competition, and three aspects are particularly worrisome. First of all: the 'Buy American' logic that underpins large parts of the Inflation Reduction Act. Second: the tax breaks that could lead to discrimination. And third: the production subsidies that could disadvantage European companies.

We need to address these issues. We need to give our answer, our European Inflation Reduction Act, and I see four main strands of action. First of all, we have to adjust our own rules to facilitate national public investment in the transition. Second, we have to reassess the need for further European public investment in the transition. Third point: we have to work with the United States to address some of the most concerning aspects of this law. And of course, the fourth topic is that we have to further accelerate our transition to green energy.

So to my first point. We need to nurture the future generation of industrial production, our own green tech industrial base – this we have to strengthen. And we need to make sure that investment aid and tax credits reach the concerned sectors more easily and faster.

This is why we will, in January, put forward a new framework to accelerate the transition. It will make our state aid rules simpler and faster for the years to come. And it will close the existing gap to target the whole value chain of strategic green sectors, including large-scale deployment and access to raw materials.

This new framework will, for example, allow Member States to take into account global conditions – not only European – when providing aid for certain green tech manufacturing products. That means that for some greenfield investments, Member States can match the subsidies of third countries, and this will give an incentive to companies to continue to invest in the European Union – not to invest in the United States, but to be here, to stay here and to invest in the European Union.

At the same time, we have to protect our single market from fragmentation and uncoordinated responses – our unity as a single market of 27. And we all know that not all Member States have the same capacity for large-scale investments in strategic sectors. The famous deep pockets: they are not everywhere.

And this leads me to my second point. We need a fair green transition in all of Europe. So to foster green tech across Europe, we need complementary European funding. And here REPowerEU is our tool. REPowerEU is the vehicle that supports SMEs and industries while they transition towards cheaper and cleaner energy. And in this context, I really want to congratulate you and I am very glad that REPowerEU was adopted this morning – late last night – and it enters into force at the beginning of next year. This is a big step forward. Many, many thanks for that. This is an enormous achievement here in Parliament.

It's good that we have REPowerEU now. I think, at the same time, the need for acceleration for renewables will also require a boost of REPowerEU so that we can properly address the new circumstances that have been created through the Inflation Reduction Act. This is in the short term.

In the medium term, however, I think we need a more structural solution because we want European industry to keep leading in the green transition. This is why I introduced the idea of a Sovereignty Fund. And I think the upcoming mid-term review of the MFF around summer will be a good opportunity to put forward our proposal in more detail.

The idea behind it is very simple. Europe is a continent full of strength. Our single market is unique. We have the largest single market worldwide. We have a highly skilled workforce. We have world-class universities. We have a tightly woven network of renowned research institutions. But we also need to galvanise our strong European industrial power in the global fight against climate change. And that calls for a common European industrial policy with common European funding.

I am speaking of beefing up the resources available for upstream research, innovation and strategic projects at EU level – just think of hydrogen, semiconductors, quantum computing, AI, biotechnologies. That's where we have to make the investments now. And for the first time we will also bring European funding to our successful important projects of common European interest, the IPCEIs. These are strategic investments to maintain our global leadership in the green tech sector.

My third point: we are working very closely with the Biden administration on the most concerning aspects of the Inflation Reduction Act, and we are discussing how to jointly strengthen our clean energy and industry basis. We need to make sure in these discussions that our respective incentive programmes will reinforce each other and that they do not come at the expense of each other.

Think, for example, of the topic of critical raw materials that are needed for green tech. Today – and we know all this – the production and processing of some of the most urgently needed critical raw materials are controlled by one single country, and that country is China. So we share the US concern about this strategic vulnerability that we have. And one of the possible solutions to overcome this monopoly that China has, without any doubt, would be, for example, to create a raw materials club with the United States and with other partners, with the aim of having reliability, transparency, fair conditions and value that stays in the country where these raw materials are being extracted. And we stand ready to work on all this hard-to-achieve joining of forces and to strengthen our industrial basis.

Finally, let us recall: all these actions serve as a bridge. It is the bridge for our clean tech industry to transform from today's costly fossil fuel energy into clean energy and affordable energy – the renewables. We need, therefore, this investment now – because these industries and our SMEs need the support now – until we have achieved an energy environment again that is affordable, that is clean and that is secure.

Honourable Members, let us never forget the bigger picture. A war is raging at the borders of our Union. Russia is escalating its attacks against civilians and civilian infrastructure, and the brave people of Ukraine need all our help. Therefore, it is not the time for a trade war with our closest partners and allies. This is a time for our democracies to join forces even more to stand up for Ukraine. I am very glad that we have agreed now on the next round of our EUR 18 billion financial package, which will reach Ukraine in early January.

Putin's war of aggression will fail, mainly for two reasons. The first one is, of course, the enormous bravery and the enormous courage of the Ukrainian people. But the second reason is the international community's remarkable unity. And therefore, let us stay strong. Let us stand up for Ukraine. Let us be united. *Slava Ukraini!* Merry Christmas and long live Europe.

Manfred Weber, *on behalf of the PPE Group*. – Madam President, Madam President of the Commission, Mr Bek, dear colleagues, today's subject is the preparation of the European Council. But before we go into this, as an institution, we are all still in shock about the corruption cases. Yesterday, we voted nearly unanimously that Vice-President Kaili cannot speak any more on behalf of the institution. That is how we show that we are ready to act; we will protect our institution. 99% of our colleagues here in this institution want to continue to work hard for the European citizens. We want to clean the table and we want to reform our working methods, and we will bring this to life in the upcoming weeks and months.

On the other hand, we must do our job, and that is what we are doing today; it's the preparation of the Council. The European Parliament was fighting hard for one fundamental idea, and that was the idea of conditionality when it comes to the funding of the European Union. The rule of law mechanism is our baby – it's Parliament's baby. We achieved this. Yesterday, when the Council for the first time agreed to block and to freeze money to Hungary, was a historic moment. We will, for the first time, use money as a tool to insist that rule of law must be implemented in the European Union.

Viktor Orbán will face problems now; that's obvious, and that is good. I want to underline this because, first of all, institutions on a European level are on the same page. We are united, and the European Parliament did it. We can be proud of this, and we will continue to fight for values. I want to mention today an international perspective.

On 13 September, 22-year-old Mahsa Amini was arrested by the Iranian morality police for improperly wearing her headscarf. Three days later she died. On 17 November, the 23-year-old Majidreza Rahnavard was arrested. On Monday, he was hanged from a crane in the city of Mashhad. 14 young people have died now in the last weeks in Iran. Their only fault is their desire for freedom. This is the Iranian reality.

We condemn the brutal killing of all these young people and all the people who fight for freedom, and here in the European Parliament we must show our support. We can consider, Madam President, that probably for the January plenary, we should also invite representatives from the Iranian opposition to this House to support them.

When we look inside the European Union, then it is about competitiveness, it's about jobs, it's about perspectives for our business, and we welcome this dimension. We support the ideas presented today by the Commission President on the IRA. That is a good answer. We don't need a war, a trade war, with our American friends. We need our solid answer with a position of strength, not being naive, but being strong. We have to strengthen our single market. For example, in the telecom sector, there is still a lot to do, and we need the main message of how can we strengthen competitiveness. There we are looking forward to the arrival of the Swedish Presidency.

I also want to mention the defence sector again, because our countries are now spending hundreds of billions of euros to buy weapons, and it is good that we are investing in our defence capacity in Europe. But Poland is buying tanks in South America and South Korea, and Germany is buying air fighters in the US. A lot of jobs are being created now, but outside of the European Union, because we are lacking a single market on the defence industry inside of the European Union, and I don't see initiatives on this. I don't see engagement on this. I have already mentioned this several times in this place. We have to speed up to build up a European defence pillar, as well as a cyber-defence brigade, a real European defence pillar inside of NATO.

For the European Council, migration linked to Schengen is also an issue to be discussed. Since 2015, we have been discussing migration, and I want to applaud and thank the Czech Presidency for all they did to achieve a solid position for the negotiations with Parliament on the migration pact. This is a big achievement. Thank you so much for this.

The urgency is obvious: 280 000 illegal migrants arrived this year in the European Union. The reception centres are again full. That's why we have to speed up on this legislation, and we have to finalise it in the upcoming months.

The Schengen enlargement must also be an issue in this regard. The veto from Austria and from the Netherlands was wrong and was not fact-based, and that's why I hope that this will also return to the negotiation table in Brussels tomorrow and on Friday. We need fairness: Romanians and Bulgarians deserve the same treatment that all the other Europeans have. That's why the enlargement must come.

Finally, on the energy side. Madam President, you know that I have insisted several times here as to why you used Article 122 for doing the energy proposals. For our legislation where Parliament is involved, the RePowerEU, we finalised now, the legislation, and for the gas cap and for other proposals you made in an urgency procedure, we are still lacking any kind of progress. We see no progress at all on the Council side. That's why, next time, please involve the European Parliament again in the place where the democratic decisions must take place. So that is my first message.

On content, the Council must speed up. The Council must now deliver on the gas cap decisions. Putin is responsible for the high price, but we could much better answer this threat from the Russian side if we were united. That's why Mr Bek and Prime Minister Fiala, good luck for the negotiations to solve this last problem. Thank you so much. I wish you good luck for the Council and, for all of us, a peaceful Christmas.

Iratxe García Pérez, *en nombre del Grupo S&D*. – Señora presidenta, señor comisario, señorías, nos encontramos a las puertas del último Consejo de este año, con tal abanico de retos encima de la mesa que se nos demanda celeridad, tesón y contundencia en la toma de decisiones. La credibilidad de nuestro proyecto europeo nos exige que ni un ápice de duda pueda resquebrajar la confianza de la ciudadanía en sus instituciones. Porque debemos seguir siendo un modelo para la ciudadanía de la Unión y también referentes en el mundo, como hacemos con el Premio Sájarov. Hemos de ser un modelo creíble y honrado en todas nuestras acciones, también a nivel institucional y en la dimensión socioeconómica.

Empiezo con esta última. He hecho referencia en varias ocasiones a la urgencia en atajar los precios desorbitados en el mercado de la energía por culpa de la guerra de Putin. La Comisión presentó una serie de medidas de forma tan urgente que, aplicando el artículo 122, se excluyó al Parlamento de su negociación. La propuesta de la Comisión para limitar el precio del gas en el mercado es ridícula. Si se hubiera seguido un procedimiento legislativo habitual, el Parlamento habría podido proponer límites realistas y efectivos. Colegas, como ya dije: si este Parlamento actuó rápidamente con las vacunas de la COVID-19, ¿no vamos a hacerlo ahora para poder afrontar esta crisis energética?

Y es que la rapidez de acción nos apremia en una crisis social y económica galopante. No podemos esperar más. La ausencia de medidas sociales ambiciosas en el paquete legislativo para los años 2023-2024 es exasperante. Por eso, desde el grupo de socialistas y demócratas, hemos propuesto un bono energético europeo, identificando más de 100 mil millones de euros en el presupuesto europeo que pueden ser utilizados para ayudar de manera urgente a las familias de forma inmediata. Pero también para el próximo año, seamos claros, continuaremos necesitando una respuesta europea para hacer frente a la crisis.

Respecto al marco institucional, hay dos cuestiones esenciales para mi grupo político: Schengen y la condicionalidad del Estado de Derecho. Sobre la primera cuestión, miren, celebro, por supuesto, la inclusión de Croacia en el espacio Schengen. Es positivo. Pero no hacerlo, además, con Rumanía y Bulgaria es un error. Un error y una injusticia. Una injusticia que despierta recelos y da coba a los movimientos antieuropeístas. Mi grupo propuso un debate sobre esta cuestión. Colegas, ¿cómo podemos mantener un debate sobre la ampliación de la Unión Europea y, en paralelo, fracasar en la inclusión en el espacio libre y común de Estados miembros que cumplen los requisitos para formar parte de ello? ¿Qué va a hacer la Comisión para corregir esta injusticia? Cuenta con nuestro apoyo para trabajar en esa dirección.

Y, en último lugar, con respecto a la condicionalidad del Estado de Derecho, por supuesto, ha sido una victoria de los que defendemos el Estado de Derecho y los valores comunes de la Unión el que pueda aplicarse el Mecanismo de condicionalidad y que se puedan plantear, reducir y congelar los fondos a aquellos países —en este caso a Hungría— cuando no están cumpliendo con el Estado de Derecho. Pero también reflexionemos sobre algo: lo que está haciendo hoy Orbán, planteando un chantaje en el Consejo, no puede ser permitido. Y eso nos debe hacer reflexionar sobre la necesidad de acabar con el principio de unanimidad en el Consejo.

Las instituciones y el marco que hemos venido construyendo son nuestro patrimonio común. La confianza de la ciudadanía en ellas es la garante de poder seguir construyendo este proyecto común de paz, de libertad y de bienestar. Y lo debemos preservar. Volviendo al inicio de mi intervención: ante cualquier ataque que debilite la confianza de la ciudadanía en la Unión Europea —ya sea atacando nuestro Estado de Derecho o los valores de nuestra Unión— y ante cualquier caso de corrupción, firmeza y tolerancia cero.

Queridos compañeros y compañeras, os deseo un feliz final de año y espero que el próximo año estemos con las mismas energías para abordar todo el trabajo que tenemos por delante.

Stéphane Séjourné, *au nom du groupe Renew.* – Madame la Présidente, chers collègues, l'ordre du jour de ce Conseil européen est moins chargé que prévu, et c'est une bonne chose. Les accords d'hier et d'avant-hier sont d'excellentes nouvelles. Je me permets de souligner que ce Parlement européen et notre groupe en particulier, Renew Europe, y sont pour beaucoup.

Sur la Hongrie, c'est historique. Le mécanisme de conditionnalité était une demande de mon groupe. Son activation par la Commission et son adoption par le Conseil ont été rendus possibles par la pression de ce Parlement européen. Monsieur Weber, vous disiez que ce mécanisme de solidarité et de conditionnalité était le bébé de ce Parlement européen. C'était avant tout le bébé d'un certain nombre de groupes politiques qui ont poussé cette démarche, mais nous le partageons volontiers aujourd'hui avec l'ensemble de ce Parlement.

Le taux minimum de taxe sur les multinationales, comme la taxe carbone aux frontières, sera bientôt une réalité conforme aux souhaits également de cette Assemblée. On doit s'en féliciter.

Bien sûr, ces dernières semaines ont aussi démontré que les vetos pourrissent la vie démocratique européenne. L'absurde décision de retarder l'entrée de la Roumanie et de la Bulgarie dans Schengen, l'incompréhensible attente des mesures sur le prix du gaz et les très inquiétants retards sur les sanctions russes… Tout cela devrait décider le Conseil à écouter ce que nous clamons depuis des mois et des mois: mettez fin à l'unanimité, passez à la majorité qualifiée, écoutez ce qu'ont dit les citoyens lors de la conférence sur l'avenir de l'Europe. Ce sont des mots que vous avez souvent entendus dans cet hémicycle, Madame la Présidente, Messieurs les représentants du Conseil, et je pense que nous devrions aller plus loin sur cette question.

C'est une question d'efficacité et de modernisation de nos institutions, d'autant plus nécessaires que les défis gigantesques auxquels nous devons faire face sont énormes. Les décisions de nos amis américains et de nos adversaires chinois mettent en péril notre tissu économique. C'est une question majeure de souveraineté. Sans tissu productif sain, le pacte vert pour l'Europe est menacé et la cohésion sociale est en danger. C'est aussi une question d'unité. Vous l'avez dit, Madame la Présidente, assez justement: les asymétries des réponses nationales posent un vrai risque de fragmentation. C'est un danger pour le marché unique. Je demande à la Commission – vous avez fait quelques annonces – et surtout aux chefs d'État ou de gouvernement de soutenir ces trois idées.

D'abord, le Fonds européen – vous en avez parlé – pour que nous produisions plus sur notre sol, par exemple des énergies renouvelables et propres, et des biens essentiels.

Un test de souveraineté pour garantir qu'aucune législation européenne ne nuira à nos objectifs sur ce domaine-là. C'est ce que nous faisons déjà d'ailleurs, sur le volet environnemental et sur celui du pacte vert pour l'Europe.

Une loi de souveraineté pour libérer les énergies et notre continent. Nos règles entravent nos entreprises et nos PME, comme les délais de permis et les démarches interminables et inutilement complexes que nous vivons dans nos pays respectifs. Trois ans pour un projet européen sur l'hydrogène: il faudrait tout au plus trois mois. Les entreprises ne demandent qu'à produire et à créer des emplois. Ce sont les forces vives de notre continent et nous en avons besoin pour être la puissance économique de demain.

Madame la Présidente, Monsieur le Ministre, je sais qu'une crise chasse l'autre. Après la COVID-19, la guerre et l'énergie, c'est désormais l'industrie qui est en haut de la pile de nos priorités. Nous n'avons pas le temps de repousser nos décisions. Nous devons innover politiquement pour bien négocier ce tournant économique du «made in Europe».

Je vous souhaite à tous également de bonnes fêtes et un joyeux Noël. Nous espérons qu'en tout cas, ce Conseil sera productif pour notre économie et nos citoyens, et pour protéger nos citoyens européens de ces crises.

Philippe Lamberts, *on behalf of the Verts/ALE Group*. – Madam President, good morning, everyone, this time I think I'm going to speak English because I want first to thank Mr Bek and congratulate the Czech Presidency. It's the second time that your country is leading the work of the European Union for six months, and I must say that you have already brought quite a number of important pieces of legislation across the line and also helped not solving – because it is not solved – but at least moving forward on the conundrum posed by the Hungarian Government because indeed, a few weeks ago, I was afraid that indeed the Council would succumb to the blackmail of Viktor Orbán and this was not the case. Actually, in a subtle way, you reminded Viktor Orbán that we can circumvent his vetoes. Of course we didn't have to go there, but the threat was enough for him to basically bow, and indeed the funds put on hold have been reduced, but not by a significant margin.

Je voudrais juste dire à Stéphane Séjourné, qui a un art consommé de tirer la couverture à soi, que dans l'affaire hongroise, le président Macron n'était pas du côté de la rigueur; il était de ceux qui voulaient lâcher la bride à Viktor Orban. Je pense qu'il faut aussi mettre au jour ce double langage.

Now I'd like to focus a bit on what you said, Madam President, because there's a lot I agree with on what you say, starting with the point that no, we Greens do not dream of a continental European Union deprived of industry. I'm an engineer by training. I think industry is a key part of our economy. But then again, everything will be in the execution, and in the details. Because what I hear from industry often times is 'Not too much pressure please! Not too much pressure and please, a lot of subsidies'. Why is that? Well because to be honest, when I look especially at large European companies, I see that we have moved from a capitalism of entrepreneurs to a capitalism of rent seekers, and they prefer to channel profits into bonus and dividends rather than into productive investment because these will generate profits down the line.

This is why we are saying, in order for European industry to lead the transition, we need to put them under pressure, and that's the targets that we adopt, that's the whole Fit for 55 package. We need serious pressure and that includes on the nature protection package because if you want innovation, you need pressure.

Then, if support is needed, I would just take up what you have said about support to the citizens with high energy bills – support must be targeted, targeted to the companies who really need it, who really need public support to bridge the transition because, yes, transition is difficult and requires investment. But, quite frankly, we have deep pockets in some Member States. We have very deep pockets in some corporations as well, and they don't need an inch, a cent of support.

So that's what I would urge you, is to find the right balance. But all in all, when I look at the architecture, your four points, I think that we can agree with that. So with that, I wish you also a good Christmas recess and look forward to continue working with you.

Jordan Bardella, *au nom du groupe ID*. – Madame la Présidente du Parlement européen, Madame la Présidente de la Commission européenne, Mesdames et Messieurs les représentants du Conseil, mes chers collègues, il ne fait pas bon, en ces temps, être une entreprise européenne. Non seulement nos entreprises subissent l'infernale hausse des prix de l'énergie, à laquelle vous n'offrez aucune solution pérenne, mais elles font maintenant face à un protectionnisme américain qui s'assume sans aucune fausse pudeur.

À l'approche du Conseil européen, voici en effet un nouveau sujet d'inquiétude pour nos entreprises: la loi sur la réduction de l'inflation, décidée par le président américain, Joe Biden. Sous couvert de lutte contre le dérèglement climatique, cette loi favorise les entreprises américaines à grands coups de subventions et de crédits d'impôts, que ce soit dans les domaines des panneaux photovoltaïques, de la voiture électrique ou encore des batteries.

Stupeur chez les élites européistes, qui croyaient encore aux versets de la religion libérale et au bréviaire de l'Organisation mondiale du commerce! Les bras ballants, les yeux écarquillés, vous semblez enfin découvrir que toutes les grandes puissances du monde promeuvent leurs entreprises, protègent leurs travailleurs et défendent leurs intérêts. Toutes sauf une, l'Union européenne, qui se veut systématiquement la meilleure élève du libre-échange, et systématiquement à ses dépens.

Nous sommes le seul continent qui ouvre à ce point ses marchés publics sans réciprocité, là où les Américains achètent américain et où les Chinois achètent chinois. Nous sommes les seuls à ouvrir à ce point nos frontières à des produits qui ne respectent aucune de nos normes, qu'elles soient sociales ou environnementales. Plutôt qu'être les éternels naïfs du commerce planétaire, qu'attendons-nous, nous, Européens, pour acheter européen? Qu'attendons-nous pour protéger les normes sociales issues de nos démocraties, en évitant toute concurrence avec des pays qui font peu de cas des droits des travailleurs? Qu'attendons-nous pour définir et défendre nos intérêts stratégiques, pour bâtir une politique ambitieuse de croissance et pour protéger nos producteurs, nos consommateurs et nos salariés?

Les Européens n'ont pas fait l'Europe pour subir, mais pour agir. Réveillons-nous! Je vous remercie et je vous souhaite à tous, mes chers collègues, un très joyeux Noël.

Beata Szydło, *w imieniu grupy ECR*. – Pani Przewodnicząca! Pani Przewodnicząca Komisji! Szanowni Państwo! Słuchając dzisiaj niektórych z Państwa, mam wrażenie, że żyjemy w alternatywnej rzeczywistości, ponieważ to wszystko, o czym Państwo tutaj mówicie, jest postawione w takiej sytuacji, jak gdyby nie było w Europie wojny. Ta wojna ciągle jest. Ta wojna jest za naszymi granicami, bezpośrednio za granicą Unii Europejskiej. Ukraina dzielnie się broni, ale potrzebuje wsparcia. Ja wiem, że są tacy politycy w Europie, którzy już zaczynają myśleć o innej rzeczywistości, i tak jak chociażby prezydent Francji domagają się gwarancji dla Rosji. Warto by było zapytać na Radzie Europejskiej, co pan prezydent Macron miał na myśli.

Naszym obowiązkiem jest wspierać Ukrainę, ale naszym obowiązkiem jest również myśleć, co zrobić, żeby uchronić państwa Unii Europejskiej, Europejczyków przed kosztami tej strasznej wojny i zadbać o ich bezpieczeństwo, również o bezpieczeństwo energetyczne. Pani przewodnicząca rozpoczęła swoją wypowiedź od refleksji sprzed trzech lat, kiedy zachwalała Zielony Ład i mówiła, że to jest szansa dla Europy. Dzisiaj można zastanowić się, jakie są koszty tego Zielonego Ładu. Narzekają przedsiębiorcy. Wysokie ceny energii dla Europejczyków. A my ciągle słyszymy o przyspieszaniu transformacji. Czas zacząć myśleć pragmatycznie. Dzisiaj Europa jest w poważnym kryzysie ze względu na wojnę na Ukrainie. I naszym obowiązkiem jest bronić przede wszystkim bezpieczeństwa i chronić Europejczyków przed ubóstwem. Tak, trzeba przeprowadzić transformację energetyczną, żeby nie popełnić takich błędów jak również i Komisja, i Parlament przed laty. Właśnie między innymi trzy lata temu, kiedy zaczynałam, kiedy pani przewodnicząca mówiła o Zielonym Ładzie. Przecież wtedy państwo popieraliście i Nordstream 2, i wspieraliście Rosję w tym, ażeby dominowała ona na rynku paliw i energetyki w Unii Europejskiej. Z tego trzeba wyciągnąć wnioski, ale trzeba to robić rozsądnie, myśląc przede wszystkim o Europejczykach. Ja dołączam się również do życzeń dla wszystkich państwa i chcę przypomnieć, że będziemy cieszyć się świętami Bożego Narodzenia.

Martin Schirdewan, *im Namen der Fraktion The Left*. – Frau Präsidentin! Im Winter des Jahres 2020 konnten über 35 Millionen Europäerinnen in der EU ihren Strom oder ihre Heizung nicht bezahlen, und diesen Winter werden es viele Millionen Menschen mehr sein. Noch immer streiten sich leider die Staats- und Regierungschefinnen und —chefs darum, wie wirklich wirksame Maßnahmen ergriffen werden können, wie die aussehen können, die den Menschen in dieser für viele existenziellen Krise über den Monat helfen können. Noch immer gibt es keine klaren Beschlüsse für einen Gaspreisdeckel, der den Menschen, dem Handwerk und den kleinen und mittelständischen Unternehmen das Leben erleichtert und die Zukunft sichert. Weil insbesondere – und das ist eine Kritik, gerichtet vor allem an die deutsche Bundesregierung – nationale Regierungen monatelang auf der Bremse gestanden haben und einen Egotrip nach dem anderen ausleben.

Viele Menschen stehen angesichts der Inflation und der damit einhergehenden Lebenshaltungskrise jeden Tag vor der Frage, ob sie heizen, das Licht anstellen oder Nahrungsmittel kaufen können. Europäische Politik zeigt sich in dieser massiven sozialen Krise erneut zu unentschlossen, zu zögerlich und nicht entscheidungsfähig genug. Deshalb will ich an dieser Stelle, Minister Bek, die Mitgliedstaaten unbedingt dazu ermutigen, den Vorschlag der Europäischen Kommission aufzunehmen und über ein groß angelegtes gemeinsames europäisches Investitionsprogramm, das den Weg aus der Krise ebnen könnte, nachzudenken und das anzunehmen.

Wir gehen auf das Jahresende zu, deshalb auch einmal ein Lob in Ihre Richtung: Trotz der politischen Differenzen, die wir sonst immer haben, Frau von der Leyen, finde ich die Idee eines europäischen Souveränitätsfonds richtig. Ich glaube, die Zeit ist reif dafür, insbesondere auch als Antwort auf den *Inflation Reduction Act* der Biden-Administration. Allerdings hilft es da nicht – und da endet mein Lob dann auch schon wieder –, auf halber Strecke stehen zu bleiben. Dann müssen wir auch über eine gründliche Reform des Binnenmarktes nachdenken. Dann müssen wir darüber nachdenken, wie Investitionen auch in die öffentliche Daseinsvorsorge ermöglicht werden, wie die Schuldenregeln dann zu reformieren sein werden, damit diese Investitionen auch tatsächlich möglich sind. Und da müssen wir darüber nachdenken, wie wirklich Eigenmittel generiert werden, z. B. in Form einer europäischen Finanztransaktionssteuer.

Eine der Ursachen für den massiven Preisanstieg liegt im Angriffskrieg Russlands gegen die Ukraine. Dieser Krieg hält seit nunmehr zehn Monaten an. Die Zivilbevölkerung leidet unter den verbrecherischen Angriffen der russischen Armee auf die zivile Infrastruktur. Kälte, Dunkelheit, Hunger werden zu Waffen, vor allem gegen Kinder, Alte und Kranke. Dieser elende Krieg muss endlich beendet werden, und dafür braucht es auch eine konsequente diplomatische Offensive der Europäischen Union. Unter Aufsicht, in Zusammenarbeit mit den Vereinten Nationen sollte es gemeinsame Initiativen mit China und mit Indien geben, die Russland an den Verhandlungstisch bringen. Auf den Rückzug der russischen Truppen aus der Ukraine muss dann aber auch die Aufhebung der Sanktionen folgen. Kluge europäische Politik sucht jetzt den Weg aus der militärischen Logik hin zu einer Friedenslogik, deren Ziel am Ende natürlich auch der Ausbau und Aufbau einer nachhaltigen europäischen Friedensordnung sein muss. Und nein, liebe Kolleginnen und Kollegen, das Einfordern von Friedensgesprächen und Diplomatie ist keine Parteinahme für Putin und seinen verbrecherischen Angriffskrieg.

Der Korruptionsskandal hat die europäischen Institutionen im Innersten erschüttert. Er ist nichts weniger als ein Schlag gegen die Glaubwürdigkeit europäischer Politik. Nun müssen auch Sie, Herr Bek, bitte dafür sorgen, dass die Transparenzregeln des Europäischen Rates verstärkt werden, denn sie sind noch wesentlich intransparenter als die des Europäischen Parlaments.

Liebe Kolleginnen und Kollegen! Es ist noch ein bisschen früh, erholsame Feiertage zu wünschen – zumindest aus meiner protestantisch kommunistischen Ethik heraus –, aber wenn es dann so weit ist, wünsche ich auch Ihnen erholsame Feiertage.

VORSITZ: OTHMAR KARAS

Vizepräsident

Tiziana Beghin (NI). – Signor Presidente, onorevoli colleghi, Presidente von der Leyen, io ho apprezzato molto il suo intervento, riconosco gli sforzi fatti e soprattutto condivido la sua affermazione che l'unica possibilità per contrastare la crisi energetica sia accelerare la transizione verso le rinnovabili.

Tuttavia non possiamo nasconderci dietro al fatto che oggi in Europa ci sono 95 milioni di persone a rischio povertà, anche a causa della crisi energetica, e per costoro l'aumento del prezzo del gas non significa abbassare il termostato, ma scegliere se mangiare o scaldarsi, ed è per questo che ritengo che il nostro ritardo nel fissare un prezzo al tetto del gas sia veramente ingiustificabile e il prossimo Consiglio europeo deve trovare un accordo.

Vorrei ricordare che a inizio 2021 il metano costava 16 euro al megawattora e questo era il valore deciso dal mercato, a cui tutti i fornitori erano ben disponibili a rifornire l'Europa, non solo Gazprom. A giugno scorso si parlava di un *price cap* a 90 euro, per cui non capisco come la Commissione abbia pensato che fosse accettabile proporre una soglia a 2,75 e anche i 225, ora, della presidenza ceca sono troppo alti e rendono il provvedimento di fatto inutile e inapplicabile.

L'UE deve rappresentare tutti i cittadini, soprattutto quelli che non possono riscaldarsi. Deve chiedere per loro un tetto al prezzo del gas rapido ed efficace.

Siegfried Mureşan (PPE). – Mr President, President von der Leyen, Minister, dear colleagues, tomorrow's European Council comes at an end of a year in which we delivered together.

We, the European Parliament, together with the Commission and the Council, managed to support Ukraine throughout the year, managed to keep the European Union united, and we managed to sanction the aggressor.

Just in recent weeks, we managed to provide funding and herewith security for Ukraine for next year; EUR 18 billion which will allow Ukraine to pay salaries, to pay pensions, to keep schools, to keep hospitals ongoing and supporting the Ukrainian people.

And just this morning, we managed to agree on REPowerEU, which means that we will be able to reduce our dependency on Russian fossil fuels, accelerate the transition to the green economy; we will be able to improve our energy infrastructure and our energy efficiency.

But let us do more dear colleagues. Full support, President von der Leyen, for the ideas, which you expressed. Let us also act not only react. High energy prices affect people and enterprises. It negatively affects the competitiveness of enterprises; let us work together early next year on a competitiveness check to make sure that all legislation that we put forward at European level does not negatively affect the competitiveness of European enterprises, but it helps them and improves their competitiveness.

Elisabetta Gualmini (S&D). – Mr President, dear Minister, dear Commissioner, dear President of the European Commission, we are at the end of 2022 and we can say that it has also been an *annus horribilis* because we face a triple attack on democracy: an attack on democracy by Russia with the criminal invasion of Ukraine; an attack on our economy, our single market with the unacceptable blackmail on gas; and then – I do not want to escape – an attack on the democratic functioning and reputation of this institution by unimaginable criminal corruption.

But, at the same time, we have stood up and reached outstanding results. We have a more social Europe, a Europe for health, REPowerEU, finally the freezing of resources for Orbán and his despotic regime. So I really hope that the Council tomorrow will go on with the same determination, also by envisaging a revision of the MFF in the summer in the name of a permanent instrument of public support for people and for companies which are struggling with inflation.

I think that we will get stronger if we do this together. Thank you and Merry Christmas to all of you.

Guy Verhofstadt (Renew). – Mr President, dear colleagues, I have listened, Mr Bek, to the long list of items that you will discuss tomorrow and after tomorrow in the Council, but I have to tell you the most important items were not there. That is, in my opinion, the sanctions and the weapons that Ukraine needs to end this war the fastest as possible.

You can all talk about price caps on oil and gas, but the best way to end the energy crisis is to end the war. For that, Ukraine needs to win the war. There, for the moment, what we see is that weak sanctions create weak results. It's ten months and what we see is an escalation of brutality of Russia in Ukraine – rape, genocide, deportations of children in that country.

So what I want and expect of the European Council is that, first of all, you start a decision to give more weapons. These discussions about Patriots, about Leopards, of the European governments is a scandal! You need to send them, to transfer them to Ukraine so that they can win the war.

The second item is on sanctions – there are still, dear colleagues, 11 oligarchs of the most important oligarchs not on the list of sanctions in Europe. In total, after the ninth package – remember you are already on the ninth package – there will be 1 400, 1 500 or maybe 1 600 on the sanction list and, in total, there are 6 000, 7 000 people that need to be on the sanction list, because they are the real backbone.

The same for Iran. Will you discuss, in fact now, sanctions for Iran? Can we still support Iranian diplomats on the territory of Europe, dear colleagues? We need to expel them the fastest as possible from Europe. That is what we need to do, and that is what I expect: sanctions and weapons for Ukraine and sanctions against Iran at the next European Council.

Rasmus Andresen (Verts/ALE). – Herr Präsident! Der ukrainische Winter ist brutal, und deshalb muss die wichtigste Botschaft sein, dass wir den vielen Ukrainerinnen und Ukrainern helfen, die seit Wochen bei Minusgraden ohne Strom und Wasser ausharren.

Putin zerstört ganz gezielt die Energieinfrastruktur der Ukraine, und die Ukraine braucht unsere Solidarität jetzt mehr denn je. Deshalb ist es gut, und da will ich mit einem Lob beginnen, dass die 18 Milliarden Euro Finanzhilfe für die Ukraine kommen. Orbáns Erpressung ist gescheitert, und das ist die gute Nachricht zum Jahresende.

Das demokratische Europa muss zusammenstehen. Wir brauchen mehr Möglichkeiten, um Vetos von Autokraten wie Orbán zu verhindern. Die Einstimmigkeit im Rat ist ein grundsätzliches Problem und muss überwunden werden. Wir brauchen mehr europäische Solidarität, Solidarität mit den vielen Millionen Europäerinnen und Europäern, die nicht mehr wissen, wie sie in diesem Winter ihre Rechnungen zahlen können. Wir brauchen eine europäische Gaspreisbremse, die Energiekosten für alle Menschen und für Unternehmen drosselt. Wir brauchen einen europäischen Investitionsfonds, um unsere Industrie zu stärken und grüne Zukunftsjobs zu schaffen. Wir brauchen eine europäische Antwort auf China und die USA. Es ist gut, dass die USA ihre Industrie emissionsfrei und innovativer machen wollen. Jetzt müssen wir nachlegen.

Frau Kommissionspräsidentin von der Leyen, es ist sehr gut, dass Sie hier heute noch einmal unterstrichen haben, dass Sie dazu bereit sind. Jetzt brauchen wir aber auch im Rat Bewegung. Wir brauchen Regierungschefinnen und Regierungschefs, die dazu bereit sind, mutige europäische Antworten zu formulieren und nationalistisches Kleinklein zu überwinden. Dieser Gipfel darf nicht ergebnislos enden.

Jaak Madison (ID). – Mr President, I wouldn't say this very often, but I couldn't agree more with Mr Verhofstadt, he was absolutely right that we need sanctions against Iran and we need to deliver more and more and in a faster way weapons to Ukraine to win the war. That's the only solution for peace and we all want to have peace, definitely.

Unfortunately, the President of the Commission has left – probably because this debate is too boring – but I was listening very carefully to her speech. She mentioned, of course, about the Green Deal, about climate change, that this will be like the main focus tomorrow in the meeting of the Council. I was thinking, when she said that we have to take care of the raw materials, that we can't accept a situation where we are relying on one country, on China, to have raw materials, and we have to take care of this.

And I was thinking, how? What would be the solution? Because, well, in fact most of the raw materials we're relying on are in China and in Africa, and in Africa very many industries are owned by the Chinese. We need cobalt for the batteries to drive our nice electric cars in the cities of Europe to feel very green. At the same time, most of the reserves of cobalt are in Congo and most of the resources are owned by Chinese in Congo. So how are we going to have this cobalt to drive our nice cars to feel very green? And how are we going to solve this? What's the solution? Are we going to kick out those Chinese from Congo or are we just maybe like following the absolutely crazy ideology where we are only about 6% of the population in the world and we are trying to save the planet? It's like the same thing, like the communist ideology in the Chinese in the sixties. I think there's no big difference.

Mittwoch, 14. Dezember 2022

Robert Roos (ECR). – Voorzitter, wéér gaat het over energie en wéér is het gerommel in de marge. Het wordt volstrekt ongeloofwaardig voor de mensen thuis, de mensen die in de kou zitten, de mensen die de rekening niet meer kunnen betalen, de mensen die jullie je klimaatideologie opdringen, waardoor we nu energietekorten hebben.

In plaats van je in te zetten voor het welzijn en de veiligheid van deze mensen, wordt hier door de socialisten – de grootste klimaatideologen en Hongarijebashers – smeergeld aangenomen, nota bene afkomstig van oliedollars uit Qatar! Wat een ironie: met de ene hand de OneLove-band omdoen, en met de andere hand het smeergeld in de zak steken. U moet zich diep schamen.

Niet het eigenbelang, maar het belang van 450 miljoen EU-burgers moet vooropstaan. Dus, stop met de ideologie, stop met de Green Deal. Zorg dat er binnen de EU weer voldoende betrouwbare en betaalbare energie geproduceerd kan worden. REPowerEU kan op dit moment alleen met meer fossiele en kernenergie.

Ik wens u allen een zalige kerst.

Tamás Deutsch (NI). – Elnök Úr! Európában súlyos energiaválság van. Az energetikai szankciókkal Európa lábon lőtte önmagát. A harmadik negyedévben már 8 európai tagállamban esett vissza a GDP az előző negyedévhez képest, és 14 országban esett vissza az ipari termelés. A Német Kereskedelmi és Iparkamara felmérése szerint a német ipari szereplők 8 százaléka tervezi Európán kívülre áthelyezni a termelést az elviselhetetlenül magas energiaárak miatt. Az energiaválság miatt a gázár hatszorosa a hosszú távú átlagárnak.

Ursula von der Leyen szerint jövőre akár 30 milliárd köbméternyi gázhiánnyal is számolhatunk Európában. Már nem csak az okoz súlyos gondot, hogy az egekben vannak az árak, hanem az is kérdés, hogy lesz-e egyáltalán gáz jövőre. Az Oroszországra kivetett szankciók nem hozták el az ukrajnai háború végét, az európai emberek szegényebbek lettek, az európai nemzetgazdaságok pedig lassan térdre kényszerülnek. Elérkezett az idő, a káros szankciókat el kell törölni.

Jens Geier (S&D). – Herr Präsident, Frau Vizepräsidentin, sehr geehrter Herr Minister Bek, verehrte Kolleginnen und Kollegen! Herr Minister Bek, Sie haben uns die Tagesordnung des kommenden Europäischen Rates vorgetragen. Dafür bedanke ich mich ganz herzlich. Es ist gut, dass der Rat alle diese drängenden Probleme anfassen will. Das ist natürlich richtig. Aber wie? Und das hätte ich gern von Ihnen gehört: Wie beurteilen Sie denn die Perspektiven, dass Sie sich auch einigen?

Frau Präsidentin von der Leyen oder in Vertretung Frau Vizepräsidentin, ich möchte ausdrücklich Ihre Vorschläge hinsichtlich einer Überarbeitung der Regeln für die Staatsbeihilfen unterstützen. Wir befinden uns ja tatsächlich in einer Phase der grundlegenden Transformation unserer Industriegesellschaften. Sie findet einerseits unter den Bedingungen von weltweitem Wettbewerb statt und andererseits unter den Bedingungen des russischen Angriffskriegs. Bei mir zu Hause im Ruhrgebiet würden wir es so beschreiben: Wir müssen der Lokomotive in voller Fahrt die Räder wechseln. Das richtige Werkzeug dafür ist nicht eines, das nur geeignet ist, Monopole im europäischen Binnenmarkt zu verhindern.

Ich unterstütze auch den Vorschlag eines Souveränitätsfonds. Wer in diesem Haus im Haushaltsausschuss sitzt, weiß, dass der EU-Haushalt gerade mal doppelt so groß ist wie der von Nordrhein-Westfalen und nicht einmal halb so groß ist wie der Haushalt der Bundesrepublik Deutschland. Deswegen brauchen wir ein neues Instrument wie den Souveränitätsfonds: Wenn die europäische Lokomotive neue Räder braucht, dann müssen wir sie auch kaufen können.

Sophia in 't Veld (Renew). – Mr President, dear colleagues, I think the importance of the decision to finally apply the rule-of-law conditionality cannot be overestimated, and I'll be a bit out of character, but I'll pay compliments to the European Commission here for doing the right thing and sticking to its guns. I also welcome the decision of the Council, and compliments to the Czech Presidency to largely endorse that decision. It was long overdue, because for over a decade kleptocrats could build their empires unhindered. But those days are over. Europe has entered a new era. This European Parliament will be very closely monitoring the full and sustainable implementation of the milestones.

And finally, colleagues, I would like to state here for the record that I believe the government of my country made a strategic mistake and committed a grave injustice by blocking the Schengen accession of Bulgaria and Romania.

Paolo Borchia (ID). – Signor Presidente, signori Commissari, signor Ministro, onorevoli colleghi, anche il 2022 giunge alla sua conclusione ma purtroppo rimangono aperti tanti degli interrogativi che denunciavamo prima dell'estate.

Restano in primo luogo irrisolte tante incertezze sui prezzi dell'energia ed è solo di ieri l'ultima fumata nera da parte del Consiglio straordinario dell'energia svoltosi a Bruxelles.

Io avrei voluto dire alla Presidente von der Leyen, prima che abbandonasse l'Aula a dibattito in corso, che accelerare sulla transizione energetica significa non avere capito che il problema è la tabella di marcia del Green Deal, totalmente irrealistica.

La Presidente ha poi parlato di preservare il mercato interno, che va benissimo, ma è evidente che se intervengono soltanto i governi che hanno spazio fiscale, così facendo si spacca l'Europa.

Troppa filosofia, troppa ideologia e poca attenzione per competitività e per difesa dei posti di lavoro. Così non si va lontano.

Charlie Weimers (ECR). – Mr President, Commissioner Vestager, Mr Bek, the energy crisis is bad now, and it will get worse next winter. There isn't enough production, supply nor import capacity. You progressives fought for the shut-down of nuclear power, resisted the restart of reactors, refused extraction, and restricted the use of branches, tops and twigs from logging in bioenergy. You push for new, expensive climate legislation. You claimed renewables offered salvation. You refused to classify nuclear as sustainable in the EU taxonomy. How do you think it's working out?

Madam President, a price cap won't make up for zealotry. It won't resolve the underlying problem, which is lack of supply. Europe needs a moratorium on new climate legislation. It needs gas drilling, the restart to nuclear, and that we stop the mindless attack on Nordic bioenergy. It's time to take a stand for people who are losing their jobs and for the pensioners in Sweden calling helplines in desperation as they cannot afford to heat their homes.

Márton Gyöngyösi (NI). – Mr President, looking back at and evaluating the year 2022, it is fair to say that it will enter our history books as the year when, after eight decades of peace, Europe once again is engaged in an all-out war against autocratic regimes. This is the great challenge of our generation. We have to defend it at our borders in Ukraine against an authoritarian aggressor. But we also have to defend it within our ranks vis-à-vis, *par excellence*, hybrid regimes like Orbán's in Hungary.

The Commission and the European Parliament have acted with exemplary speed and determination in sanctioning Russia. Now, just the same way as corrupt bureaucrats or MEPs undermine the reputation of our institutions, so do authoritarian and corrupt governments of certain Member States. Why the double standards then? Why do we sanction one and not the other? If you will ever have the courage to sanction the representatives of the Orbán regime directly and have problems identifying the friends, relatives or cronies of Viktor Orbán, then please let me know. I'll be happy to help. Thank you and Merry Christmas.

Paulo Rangel (PPE). – Senhor Presidente, Ministro Mikuláš Bek, Vice-Presidente Margrethe Vestager, começo, naturalmente, por felicitar a Croácia pela sua adesão ao Espaço Schengen, mas também por dizer que é uma enorme desilusão, uma enorme injustiça saber que o governo da Áustria e o governo dos Países Baixos não aceitaram a entrada da Roménia e da Bulgária no Espaço Schengen. A Roménia e a Bulgária cumprem todas as condições para serem membros plenos do Espaço Schengen. Espero que o Conselho Europeu trate deste assunto e o resolva em tempo útil.

Para além disso, espero também que o Conselho Europeu dê o estatuto de candidato à Bósnia-Herzegovina. Será um sinal importantíssimo para este país, que precisa de incentivos. Será um sinal importantíssimo para os Balcãs Ocidentais.

Queria também deixar aqui uma mensagem à Presidente da Comissão sobre as interconexões energéticas. Em Alicante, Emmanuel Macron, Pedro Sanchéz e António Costa falaram do novo gasoduto, mas este não resolve os problemas. Não trataram da questão essencial para as renováveis na Península Ibérica, que são as interconexões elétricas nos Pirenéus. Sobre isto nada se disse, sobre isto não há acordo. Trata-se de um impasse enorme na criação de uma nova ligação energética entre a Península Ibérica e o continente europeu.

Javier Moreno Sánchez (S&D). – Señor presidente, señorías, son tiempos convulsos para el Parlamento Europeo, pero son, sobre todo, tiempos difíciles para los ciudadanos y las ciudadanas. La inflación está llevando el hambre y el frío a muchos hogares europeos. Muchas pymes no pueden pagar la factura energética y tienen que cerrar. Al mismo tiempo, las compañías energéticas siguen especulando para enriquecerse de manera escandalosa.

Más que nunca, nuestros Gobiernos deben gobernar para la gente y poner la economía al servicio de los ciudadanos, y no al revés, con políticas directas para protegerles. La Unión Europea debe aprender de sus errores del pasado y, frente a la austeridad que fracasó en la crisis financiera, debe imponerse la defensa de la solidaridad y la cohesión social. Por eso hay que bajar los precios de la energía, proteger a los ciudadanos con un incremento del salario mínimo y garantizar una renta mínima para los más desfavorecidos. El Consejo Europeo de esta semana deberá adoptar medidas urgentes y los recursos financieros adecuados para ayudar a los que más lo necesitan. El frío no espera.

Dacian Cioloș (Renew). – Doamnă vicepreședintă domnule ministru, aș vrea să vă vorbesc astăzi despre un subiect care, din păcate, nu este încă pe agenda Consiliului, dar care nu văd cum poate fi evitat pentru că a devenit un subiect politic european. E vorba de aderarea României și Bulgariei la Schengen și de veto-ul nedrept prin care Austria a blocat acest proces. Din această cauză, în România foarte mulți oameni sunt furioși. Se vorbește despre boicotarea firmelor și produselor austriece, despre ochi pentru ochi, se inflamează discursuri naționaliste și antieuropene.

Oamenii, pe bună dreptate, nu înțeleg de ce le este blocat un drept.

Cred că Consiliul European poate mai mult decât să ridice din umeri sau să amâne rezolvarea acestui blocaj, care este unul eminamente politic, al guvernului austriac. De aceea, aștept de la șefii de stat sau de guvern o abordare politică, o viziune despre o Europă unită, o soluție pentru rezolvarea acestui blocaj.

Aș vrea să găsesc în concluziile acestui Consiliu o recunoaștere a unei realități. România îndeplinește toate condițiile de aderare la Schengen și o cale de urmat pentru a ieși din acest impas trebuie să rezulte din concluziile acestui Consiliu, un impas care lovește în inima unității și solidarității europene. Și avem nevoie de solidaritate și încredere în Uniunea Europeană și nu în a inflama spirite naționaliste și antieuropene.

Sylvia Limmer (ID). – Herr Präsident! Das ist das Resultat ideologisch verblendeter Energiepolitik. Das ist das Ergebnis grüner Politik, sozusagen gelebter *Green Deal*. Frieren zu Hause, im Büro und in öffentlichen Gebäuden. Aber Energieeinsparzwang und drohende Energierationierungen sind lediglich die unmittelbaren Folgen ihres CO_2-Tunnelblicks, lächerlicher, volatiler erneuerbarer Energien und einer Sanktionspolitik, die zuallererst uns selbst schadet.

Diese Energiepolitik ist die Rückabwicklung unserer gesamten modernen Zivilisationsgeschichte, sie ist sozusagen Ihre Antithese. Und Sie? Ah, Frau von der Leyen, hat offensichtlich den Rückzug in ihr – vermutlich warmes – Büro bereits angetreten. Und Sie, der Europäische Rat, Ihre nicht gewählte EU-Kommission mit Legislativbefugnis und leider auch eine Mehrheit im EU-Parlament und ihre Politik sind eine Zumutung für alle Bürger.

Carlo Fidanza (ECR). – Signor Presidente, signor Vicepresidente, signor Ministro, onorevoli colleghi, il prossimo Consiglio europeo è chiamato a fornire risposte risolutive. Il sostegno all'Ucraina deve continuare, è l'unica premessa per una pace giusta e duratura, ma famiglie e imprese non possono permettersi ulteriori ritardi o misure inefficaci.

L'istituzione di un *price cap* in contrasto alla speculazione sul prezzo del gas, riforma del mercato dell'energia elettrica, sicurezza degli approvvigionamenti, fuori dalla solita retorica: è su queste scelte che si misurerà il tasso di ambizione europea dei singoli governi ed è su questo che anche il nuovo governo conservatore italiano si spenderà.

Allo stesso modo valutiamo con favore l'attenzione dedicata finalmente al Mediterraneo centrale con il nuovo piano d'azione richiesto dall'Italia e presentato dalla Commissione. È tempo di passare dalle parole ai fatti: protezione delle frontiere esterne, approccio europeo all'asilo e ai rimpatri, ripristino della legalità per le navi ONG, investimenti significativi per portare sviluppo in Africa.

È necessario, infine, un immediato riequilibrio delle nostre relazioni transatlantiche dopo il varo del piano di sostegno all'economia americana. Servono strumenti nuovi poiché, se la risposta fosse affidata alle sole capacità di bilancio nazionale, il trentennale che celebreremo a gennaio potrebbe essere l'ultimo compleanno del mercato unico.

Željana Zovko (PPE). – Mr President, tomorrow's Council meeting promises to be a historic one. Today is a historic date: 27 years ago the Dayton Paris Peace Accord was signed in Paris. If the leaders of the Member States follow the recommendation of the Commission and their own ministers on European affairs, Bosnia and Herzegovina will be granted a candidate status. That means Bosnia and Herzegovina is sailing towards permanent peace and stability. We forgot this country, but we were awakened with the terrible war in Ukraine and we have to really take care of Bosnia and Herzegovina to find permanent peace and stability, in changing electoral law and giving all their people chances to live and to be an anchor of stability for the Western Balkans.

This also takes us back with the discussion that the Council will tomorrow have on EU security and defence policy and the implementation of the strategic compass. The current security challenges and the ongoing conflicts in our wider neighbourhood are reminders that we need a more proactive and preventive diplomacy.

We can learn from the EU actions in the South Caucasus and avoid the mistakes made in conflict areas such as the Sahel and Afghanistan. Member States need to step away from their individual interests and start building a joint capacity in external security policy.

Dan Nica (S&D). – Domnule vicepreședinte Karas, doamnă vicepreședintă Vestager, domnule ministru Bek, ne așteptăm ca acest Consiliu să aducă mult-așteptata plafonare a prețurilor la energie electrică și la gaze, pentru ca și în Uniunea Europeană cetățenii și firmele să poată să aibă acces la energie electrică și la gaze care să fie bazate pe prețul corect, adică prețul de producție sau prețul de import, plus o marjă europeană medie de 10-12 % a profitabilității. Puneți capăt speculațiilor, pentru că această iarnă va fi grea și imposibil de trecut și de cetățenii europeni, și de firmele europene.

În al doilea rând, mă aștept ca acest Consiliu să poată să discute despre atitudinea pe care Austria a avut-o în privința aderării României la spațiul Schengen, o atitudine incorectă, ilegală, antieuropeană și mă aștept să-i spuneți foarte clar domnului cancelar Nehammer că este prezent acolo în calitate de șef al guvernului Austriei, o țară profund europeană și nu în calitate de prieten al domnului Putin și mă aștept ca această atitudine să fie reparată, acest vot nedrept care a umilit o țară și un popor.

Și, domnule vicepreședinte Karas, vreau să vă mulțumesc personal pentru poziția dumneavoastră foarte corectă în privința aderării României la spațiul Schengen. Aveți mulțumirile mele și ale românilor.

Harald Vilimsky (ID). – Herr Präsident, meine sehr geehrten Damen und Herren! Sie debattieren hier die Ratssitzung für den 15. Dezember, und da steht auch die Frage Ukraine-Russland und die mögliche Hilfszahlung hier im Raum. Sie haben die Ungarn hier sehr kritisiert, die das blockiert haben, weil – so hat es geheißen – hier in Ungarn möglicherweise Korruption vorherrscht.

Ich habe das Gefühl, dass Sie bei der Debatte heute die aktuellen Vorwürfe komplett negieren, nämlich dass hier über 20 Durchsuchungen im Bereich der Sozialdemokraten stattgefunden haben, in Privatwohnungen, in Büros, dass hier über 1,5 Millionen Euro in diversen Plastiksackerln gefunden wurden, dass dieses Haus und Europa inmitten eines der größten Korruptionsskandale überhaupt steht. Das sollte hier Diskussion sein: die Glaubwürdigkeit, die völlig verloren gegangen ist. Auf der anderen Seite haben Sie es ja nicht nur bei den Sozialdemokraten, Sie haben es auch bei den Konservativen – Stichwort Pfizer, hier die Geheimhaltungspolitik der Kommission.

Ich kann sagen, das, was diese Europäische Union hier noch in eine gute Zukunft führen kann: Ziehen Sie die Wahlen vor, gestalten Sie Europa in einer Art und Weise, dass all die Probleme, die wir jetzt haben, möglichst hinweggewählt werden können, und negieren Sie nicht das, was sich aktuell hier in der Europäischen Union an Skandalen manifestiert.

Daniel Caspary (PPE). – Herr Präsident, sehr geehrte Kolleginnen und Kollegen! Wir haben in den letzten Tagen erlebt, was es bedeutet, wenn sich die Europäische Union für Rechtsstaatlichkeit einsetzt. Wir haben erlebt, dass der Rat, die Kommission, das Parlament gemeinsam standen, und deshalb haben wir hinbekommen, dass Gelder nach Ungarn nicht ausgezahlt werden.

Sehr geehrter Herr Kollege Vilimsky, das ist auch genau der Unterschied zu dem, was Sie gesagt haben: Bei uns im Europäischen Parlament arbeiten wir nämlich solche Vorwürfe auf. Wenn jemand etwas macht, dann ermittelt die Staatsanwaltschaft, dann ermitteln im Zweifel Polizisten, und das geht dann vor Gericht. Das ist auch der Unterschied zu Ungarn, wo eben Korruption stattfindet und diejenigen nicht angeklagt werden, nicht vor Gericht gehen und wir die Sorge haben müssen, dass dieser Missbrauch nicht geahndet wird. Genau deshalb ist es richtig, dass wir beides machen, nämlich hier im Haus die Vorwürfe aufgreifen und aufarbeiten, aber auf der anderen Seite auch sicherstellen, dass Länder, wo die Regierungen fragwürdig unterwegs sind – wie in Polen oder Ungarn –, die Gelder nicht bekommen. Nehmen Sie das doch bitte endlich mal zur Kenntnis.

Deswegen für das Wochenende: Ich wünsche mir, dass die Staats- und Regierungschefs bei diesem Weg weitergehen, dass die Vorschläge, die die Kommissionspräsidentin heute hier gemacht hat, bei den Staats- und Regierungschefs auch eine Mehrheit finden. Ich denke, wir sind damit auf einem guten Weg, unseren Kontinent in bessere Tage zu führen.

Maria-Manuel Leitão-Marques (S&D). – No próximo Conselho as soluções energéticas e as respostas económicas têm que caminhar lado a lado. Precisamos de estender o mecanismo ibérico que já permitiu a Portugal reduzir as faturas da energia das famílias e das empresas, num valor de 360 milhões de euros face ao cenário sem este mecanismo.

Precisamos de pôr em prática aquisições conjuntas de gás para conseguir preços mais favoráveis e precisamos de acelerar a reforma estrutural do mercado de eletricidade que a Comissão tem prometido. São as famílias e as nossas economias que temos de defender, é a saúde dos nossos cidadãos, que depende do calor das suas casas que temos de preservar.

É por isso que o grupo dos socialistas e democratas está a propor um pacote de emergência energética, sinalizando verbas para o efeito no orçamento europeu. Desejamos que o resultado deste Conselho alivie o problema energético que estamos a viver, de modo a que cidadãos europeus possam iniciar o ano de 2023 com a esperança de dias melhores.

Ioan-Rareș Bogdan (PPE). – Excelențele voastre, membrii Consiliului au șansa de a repara mâine mizeria făcută României prin blocarea aderării la Schengen. Îi vor face, altfel, un serviciu cancelarului Karl Nehammer. Cancelarul Austriei riscă să piardă alegerile din țara sa pentru că valul de antipatie stârnit prin blocarea României se poate transforma în bumerang la alegerile din ianuarie.

Companiile austriece prezente în România, care asigură 7 % din PIB-ul Austriei, adică 32 de miliarde de euro, fac deja presiuni asupra guvernului de la Viena să revină asupra votului său, considerând votul profund nedrept. Întreaga presă austriacă: Die Presse, Österreichische Zeitung, Der Standard, Kurier, ORF, până și cea oficială critică în cor atitudinea profund antieuropeană a cancelarului austriac. Îl acuză că își izolează țara, că își pedepsește propriile companii, că distruge reputația Austriei. Și vă spun ceva, Herr Nehammer, nimeni nu a câștigat vreodată un război cu presa! Nimeni, niciodată!

Austria nu a respectat actele normative ale UE și, prin urmare, încalcă statul de drept. Cetățenii austrieci trebuie să știe că, din această cauză, țara sa se poate alege cu fonduri europene blocate.

Și încă ceva, Herr Nehammer: piatra lui David, căruia puțini îi dădeau o șansă, l-a nimerit, totuși, pe Goliat. Atenție la ce ați pornit cu țara mea !

Noi nu uităm, chiar dacă iertăm.

În schimb, îi mulțumesc vicepreședintelui Othmar Karas pentru modul absolut european în care a procedat și pentru poziția pe care o are chiar dacă contrazice propriul președinte de partid.

Christel Schaldemose (S&D). – Hr. Formand! Ærede kolleger, kommissær! Vi har nu haft det indre marked i 30 år. Vi har formået – med en åben økonomi – at få skabt en retfærdig ramme for konkurrencen. En lige konkurrence. Det har skabt arbejdspladser, og det har skabt vækst. Nu står vi i en ny global situation, hvor vi er udfordret fra Kina med deres statsstøtte og fra USA med ikke mindst den nye »Inflation Reduction Act«. Ursula von der Leyen talte også om det.

Min opfordring her i dag er, at være meget, meget varsom i de løsninger, der skal findes til rådsmødet og i Kommissionen. Vi har brug for at beskytte vores indre marked imod at blive fragmenteret. Det er et rigtig, rigtig vigtigt, men vi skal heller ikke opbygge for mange barrierer for en åben økonomi. Vi har virkelig brug for at sikre en ordentlig balance i det her.

Så når I arbejder med de her ting, så prøv at gøre det godt og retfærdigt og åbent og fremtidssikret. Og det handler simpelthen om, at vi skal undgå et fragmenteret indre marked. Jeg tror på I kan, men husk balancerne. Det er helt afgørende. Ellers kan vi ikke fejre de næste 30 år for det indre marked.

Dolors Montserrat (PPE). – Señor presidente, nos enfrentamos a grandes desafíos, como la crisis energética y económica, que merecen una respuesta coordinada en toda Europa. Pero también nos jugamos el prestigio de nuestras instituciones y la fortaleza de nuestras democracias.

Por eso, hoy pregunto al Consejo y a la Comisión: ¿comparten que se rebajen las penas a corruptos en el Código Penal, siendo esos mismos corruptos quienes lo están pidiendo? ¿Comparten que se supriman delitos que protegen al Estado frente a ataques a la democracia, porque los que la atacan así lo han pedido? ¿Comparten que, en lugar de fortalecer las instituciones y garantizar la independencia del Tribunal Constitucional, se cambien las reglas del juego para colocar a miembros de un Gobierno en él y que, así, influyan en sus decisiones?

Entiendo que no. Pues eso ocurre hoy en España con su Gobierno. Afrontemos juntos todos los retos y las amenazas que tenemos en Europa, por supuesto, pero no podemos callarnos cuando nuestras democracias se debilitan. Yo no lo haré.

VORSITZ: EVELYN REGNER

Vizepräsidentin

Spontane Wortmeldungen

Juan Fernando López Aguilar (S&D). – Señora presidenta, señor presidente en ejercicio del Consejo, señora presidenta de la Comisión, en las conclusiones de la Conferencia sobre el Futuro de Europa, hay una que coincide con una vieja aspiración del Grupo Socialista de este Parlamento Europeo: acabar con los vetos de la unanimidad en cualquier decisión que no concierna a los aspectos constitucionales, los valores comunes, la Carta de los Derechos Fundamentales de la Unión Europea y la ampliación.

¿Tiene sentido la unanimidad en materia de energía? ¿Tiene sentido la unanimidad en materia de fiscalidad? Y, sobre todo, ¿tiene sentido la unanimidad para vetar el acceso al espacio Schengen de Bulgaria y Rumanía? Celebramos el acceso de Croacia, pero es una injusticia que se continúe impidiendo a Bulgaria y Rumanía el pleno disfrute del artículo 45 de la Carta de los Derechos Fundamentales de la Unión Europea: la libertad de circulación.

Y esa injusticia requiere una acción política. Y este Parlamento quiere apoyar cualquier acción política y judicial que quiera repararla porque, de otro modo, estamos alimentando exclusivamente el euroescepticismo y la eurofobia, actitudes antieuropeas, en dos Estados miembros. No puede ser que dos Estados miembros de veintisiete hayan vetado a dos Estados miembros que hace tiempo que cumplen los criterios técnicos y políticos que se les han requerido.

Por tanto, es hora de reparar esa injusticia con cualquier acción política y judicial al alcance de la Comisión.

Michaela Šojdrová (PPE). – Paní předsedající, opakovaně zde z různých stran zaznělo ocenění českého předsednictví a já bych se chtěla připojit. Bylo to upřímné a mě těší, že Česká republika v této těžké době pomohla nést břemeno Evropské unie.

Je jasné, že na všechna ta dnešní i zítřejší jednání se díváme očima dopadu ruské agrese proti Ukrajině. To, co denně vidíme, jak Rusové dále útočí, potvrzuje, že jsme se rozhodli správně a že je to jediná cesta pro nás, i když nás to dnes stojí mnoho. Ale v budoucnosti by nás to stálo mnohem více, kdybychom takto jednoznačně nereagovali. Z mnoha úkolů, které vás zítra čekají, si budete muset vybrat jen několik, a to těch zásadních, kterým občané budou rozumět. Pokud chceme zlepšit bezpečnost, je třeba přijmout Rumunsko i Bulharsko do Schengenu a pomoci jim bránit vnější hranice, zastropování cen dováženého plynu pro zlepšení energetické situace a podpora Ukrajiny nejen slovy, ale hlavně zbraněmi. Přeji Vám hodně sil do budoucích let.

Margarida Marques (S&D). – Senhora Presidente, queria felicitar o Conselho pelo acordo tardio de há dois dias. Ultrapassaram o veto da Hungria, podemos agora aprovar a taxa global e avançar com o apoio à Ucrânia em 18 mil milhões de euros.

Fizeram funcionar a condicionalidade do Estado de direito, obrigando a Hungria a fazer reformas, congelando o financiamento europeu à Hungria. Parabéns, Presidência. No entanto, não podemos continuar reféns do veto e temos que estar atentos à forma como este pacote é implementado.

É positivo ver o ponto das interconexões energéticas na agenda e, aqui, destaco o acordo Portugal-Espanha-França, tão importante para acabar com a ilha ibérica, tão importante para a promoção e para o aprofundamento do mercado interno da energia e da união para a energia.

Maria Grapini (S&D). – Doamnă președintă, doamnă comisar, stimați colegi, tema de astăzi: criza energetică și efectele, războiul, securitatea, relațiile transatlantice, toate duc efecte spre cetățean. Dar recunosc că sunt surprinsă că pe ordinea de zi a Consiliului din 15 decembrie nu apare și această problemă care trenează de 11 ani, și anume discuția legată de votul absolut aberant și neacoperitor juridic al Austriei, de fapt al cancelarului, nu al cetățenilor din Austria. De aceea, vă rog, doamna comisar, pe dumneavoastră, președinția cehă, insistați să se reia acest vot care nu este acoperit juridic și mulțumesc colegilor și președintelui Comisiei LIBE și tuturor colegilor care au semnat o scrisoare pe care am dorit să o transmitem Comisiei Europene ca semnal că trebuie să urgentați procedurile de modificare a Tratatului, să scăpăm de această unanimitate care blochează tot ce muncim noi aici, în Parlamentul European. Sper ca România și Bulgaria să intre cât mai rapid în Schengen și asta însemnând imediat ce începem anul viitor, pentru că este dreptul lor și piața unică nu este piață unică, este o piață fragmentată și, în acest context, nu putem avea competitivitate.

(Ende der spontanen Wortmeldungen)

Margrethe Vestager, *Executive Vice-President of the Commission*. – Madam President, it has been a very interesting debate. I think it has been comforting for everyone listening to hear the very, very sharp condemnation of the corruption. And I think it's really important that that is being said.

As speakers have said today, as a first sentence, showing the willingness to take action. Because people should know that this House is not a corrupt House, that the European institutions are not corrupt institutions. I think that is absolutely essential.

Also for voters, for citizens as such, to appreciate the results that have been achieved. It is really, really impressive how this House has answered the calls from all of Europe in order to pass legislation that will change reality on the ground.

So I want to congratulate you on these results in these last weeks and days before Christmas that the House shows we listen and we deliver.

I also hear and feel the disappointment over the discussions over Schengen and the decisions taken there. As you will know from the Commission side, we were ready with a full recommendation, having followed very closely the preparation, the changes, the reforms in the countries that were ready to join.

Of course, we will keep working for a full result for a full Schengen Area that can serve European citizens as the Schengen Area should serve our citizens.

And maybe what I hope and what the President also presented in her speech, the focus on where we are as Europeans, because a lot of work this year has been dealing with the question of the energy crisis. And I do appreciate and share the empathy shown by so many speakers of the difficulties in some families to heat their homes.

The thing is that in everything we do to tackle the urgency, we need to make sure that we keep a direction for a Europe that is truly decarbonised, for a Europe that is truly competitive, for a Europe that is truly inclusive. And part of that is indeed the single market. I'm really appreciative of the mention of that. We are now celebrating 30 years first thing in the New Year. That single market needs to be continuously nurtured, tendered, cleaned-up, in order to make sure that every business, every citizen can make the most of it. The paradox, of course, is that even in crisis, even with our emergency measures, we need the fundamentals to work and the single market is part of our fundamentals.

And the second of our fundamentals is that Europe is the most preferred trading partner for 74 countries on this planet. And that openness has created prosperity for Europeans to build welfare states all over Europe for decades with no end. Things are changing, but we should not let go of the fundamentals, our ambitions when it comes to cleaning-up Europe, for the Green Deal to be our growth strategy, for the single market to help us out, for Europe to be a continent that work with others.

The changes that we are presenting, they are changes that build on those fundamentals but take, you know, the context into consideration because new measures are needed. We should make the most, and we will discuss that shortly, of the interpretation of the Inflation Reduction Act in order for European businesses not to be discriminated. We must make sure that businesses in the green sector that they can be supported in order to compete fair and square with the same sector in the US.

But since state aid depends on Member State discussions and Member State pockets and the depth of those pockets, it is really important that we press on for the third element, which is to have a truly European fund in order to support European industry for every Member State and every part of these supply chains, when it comes to green, to feel included.

And last but not least, to accelerate the Green Transition, because the only real promise that we can give to European industry is the promise of affordable, stable, decarbonised energy to be provided on this wonderful continent, and for that REPowerEU has just been agreed upon. For that, I want to thank you. This is a major step forward.

Mikuláš Bek, *President-in-Office of the Council.* – Madam President, Vice-President of the Commission, honourable Members, thank you for your remarks and comments. I will convey them to the President of the European Council.

To conclude, leaders will be addressing key challenges facing us this winter with regard to our safety and security, our continued access to affordable energy supply, and the strength and resilience of our economy.

Some of you have expressed your frustration regarding the lack of agreement regarding the full application of Schengen to Romania and Bulgaria, mentioning the impact of national vetoes. We will have the opportunity to discuss the issue of vetoes later today, and I look forward to what will certainly be an interesting debate.

Regarding Schengen, I should reiterate that completing the Schengen area with all Member States who fulfil the conditions was a priority of our Presidency and we are very pleased that Croatia was able to take this important step. Bulgaria and Romania fulfil the conditions for the full application of the Schengen acquis, and we commend both countries for all their achievements. The Council will continue to work hard to ensure that we can welcome them into the Schengen family soon.

Regarding the price cap, let me assure you that the Czech Presidency is working literally day and night, and we are confident that we will achieve results in the course of the next week.

As regards the need to support Ukraine with weapons, let me underline that Europe is doing its homework. A number of Member States have been providing military equipment to Ukraine since the very outset of the war, including my own country, which literally emptied its own stocks, and Czech factories are churning out ammunition for Ukraine at an exceptional rate.

On sanctions: the EU adopted the biggest and most ambitious ever set of sanctions today and will continue to work on more sanctions, as needed and as long as necessary. Beyond the sanctions, the EU will continue to support Ukraine with economic and military equipment. On this aspect, I should highlight again the important agreement reached at the Foreign Affairs Council on the reinforcement of the European Peace Facility, which will provide greater sustainability to this crucial instrument for supporting Ukraine's war effort.

On the international front in general, maintaining strong ties with our allies will be crucial, whether that is in our southern neighbourhood, across the Atlantic or in the Western Balkans. Here, I once again recall yesterday's Council's recommendation to the European Council to approve the candidate status of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Madam President, Vice-President Vestager, honourable Members, today is the last day that I have the privilege to address this plenary in my capacity as the representative of the Presidency of the Council of the European Union, and I would like to thank President von der Leyen, Mr Weber, Mr Lamberts and others for your words of appreciation. The Czech Presidency is not over yet and, indeed, we will continue together working hard until the very last moment to make it a success, and thereafter.

I would like to take this opportunity already now to thank you very much for the cooperation between our institutions. We have together achieved a lot, and it has been an honour and a pleasure indeed. As from next year, I will pass on the relay baton to my Swedish colleague, Jessika Roswall, whom I wish all the best.

Meanwhile, I wish you all a Merry Christmas and look forward to our other exchanges, which we will have today. Thank you very much, once again, for your attention.

Die Präsidentin. – Die Aussprache ist geschlossen.

Schriftliche Erklärungen (Artikel 171)

Joachim Stanisław Brudziński (ECR), *na piśmie*. – Grudniowe posiedzenie Rady Europejskiej to ważna okazja, by zastanowić się nad najistotniejszymi wyzwaniami, przed którymi aktualnie stoją kraje Unii Europejskiej. Konsekwencje trwającej wciąż agresji Rosji na Ukrainę przekraczają granice Ukrainy, a wszyscy odczuwamy je coraz dotkliwiej. O ile Europa Zachodnia odczuwa ogromny wzrost cen energii, to sam naród ukraiński musi mierzyć się ze zniszczeniami dużo bardziej złożonymi: z brakiem ogrzewania, dostaw wody i energii elektrycznej w wyniku regularnych ataków na infrastrukturę krytyczną tego kraju. To wszystko, w dodatku w trakcie zimy, jest wyzwaniem dla obrońców niepodległości Ukrainy, dla nas wszystkich zaś wezwaniem do solidarnej pomocy.

Jednym z tematów spotkania Rady ma być kwestia energii i sytuacji ekonomicznej. Europejczycy płacą teraz rachunek za lata nieodpowiedzialnej polityki energetycznej, opartej na uzależnieniu od płynącego z Rosji gazu. Jak błędna była ta polityka, zrozumiała już chyba większość mieszkańców Europy. Trzeba jednak zrobić wszystko, by zdywersyfikować źródła dostaw energii, ustabilizować ceny, pomóc przetrwać najtrudniejsze zimowe miesiące najbardziej potrzebującym pomocy, by w końcu przemyśleć politykę energetyczną Wspólnoty. Ostrzegaliśmy przed projektem Nord Stream, następnie Nord Stream II, jednak głosu z Polski nie słuchano. To trzeba zmienić i wyciągnąć wnioski, by drugi raz nie powtarzać tych samych błędów.

Ivan Štefanec (PPE), *písomne*. – Teší ma, že Európska rada má v pláne opätovne potvrdiť, že dôrazne odsudzuje útočnú vojnu Ruska proti Ukrajine a plne podporuje jej nezávislosť, zvrchovanosť a územnú celistvosť. Dobrou správou bude aj to, že EÚ poskytne v roku 2023 pomoc Ukrajine vo výške 18 miliárd EUR, ako aj zintenzívni poskytovanie humanitárnej pomoci a obnovu kritickej infraštruktúry krajiny. Tiež je nevyhnutné zabezpečiť účinné vykonávanie reštriktívnych opatrení, zabrániť ich obchádzaniu a opätovne vyzývať všetky krajiny, aby sa k nám pripojili. V kontexte riešenia energetickej krízy treba posilniť solidaritu prostredníctvom lepšej koordinácie nákupu plynu, cezhraničnej výmeny a spoľahlivých referenčných cien. S cieľom postupne ukončiť závislosť EÚ od fosílnych palív z Ruska a urýchliť zelenú transformáciu je nesmierne dôležité zvýšiť investície do inovácie, infraštruktúry a prepojení, a do projektov v oblasti energetickej efektívnosti.

4. Reaktion der EU auf das amerikanische Gesetz zur Senkung der Inflation (Aussprache)

Die Präsidentin. – Als nächster Punkt der Tagesordnung folgt die Aussprache über die Erklärungen des Rates und der Kommission zu der Reaktion der EU auf das amerikanische Gesetz zur Senkung der Inflation (2022/2997(RSP)).

Mikuláš Bek, *President-in-Office of the Council*. – Madam President, honourable Members, Vice-President of the Commission, the topic of possible repercussions of the US Inflation Reduction Act on the EU has been high on our political agendas in recent weeks and months. There are concerns in the Council that the discriminatory elements of the Inflation Reduction Act, which are designed to benefit US-based manufacturers without guaranteeing a level playing field, may have a negative impact on European companies.

The new US legislation, even if not in place yet, is already having an impact on the investment plans of our companies, and there is a clear potential for a more systemic impact on EU industry, in particular in sectors which are of crucial importance for our green transition. We are encouraged by recent positive statements of President Biden himself and the ongoing talks with the US administration. We will support any credible solutions that emerge out of these talks. But there is not much time left before the Inflation Reduction Act enters into force.

While the cooperation with our US partners in addressing the most concerning aspects of the Inflation Reduction Act will remain important, we will also need to consider in parallel what we can do at European level to support the competitiveness and resilience of our companies, the attractiveness of the EU as an investment location and reinforce our ability to step up our green transition in this crucial moment.

We will collectively need to consider the appropriate measures. For instance, regarding efficiency of State aid and industrial policy to decisively address the distortions created by the Inflation Reduction Act or any other future measures that put our companies and the European economy at a competitive disadvantage.

The US programme comes at a moment where high energy prices are already having a considerable negative impact on our industries and our competitiveness. The EU should be proactive and double the efforts already under way to extend trade opportunities for our companies and improve access to raw materials, in particular those which are of essential importance for the green transition. Europe has been very active on this front with key agreements under way or just concluded, like the very recent modernisation of the free trade agreement with Chile, thus showing Europe's continued engagement with partners on this positive agenda. Europe needs to act swiftly and the upcoming European Council will bring a timely opportunity to hold a dedicated debate on our transatlantic relations.

Finally, let me underline that while we are continuing engaging with the US on the Inflation Reduction Act, our strategic partnership remains stronger than ever as Russia's ongoing war of aggression against Ukraine shows the crucial importance of the transatlantic bond for our as well as global security. Thank you very much for your attention.

Margrethe Vestager, *Executive Vice-President of the Commission*. – Madam President, honourable Members, thank you for this opportunity to present the Commission's engagement with the US on the Inflation Reduction Act. The competitiveness of European industry faces a double challenge. First, Russia's war and the weaponisation of energy supply has led to an extraordinary increase in energy prices in Europe. As we just discussed, this is also hitting many households very hard. And also because of that the dramatic increase in the price differences between Europe and the US in particular.

Second, the US Inflation Reduction Act provides generous incentives for investing in the US, including in some ways that are discriminatory against European companies and other companies as well. The EU has encouraged the US for a very long time to increase its climate action, to do more. The Inflation Reduction Act is an important initiative to deliver on this and the Commission is fully supportive of the climate goals that the US is trying to achieve with the Inflation Reduction Act.

So far for the good news. Because the Inflation Reduction Act discriminates against EU producers and exports. Many of the green subsidies come with local content, assembly, manufacturing requirements. The effect will be felt not only by EU manufacturers of key final products to enable the green transition, but also their suppliers of upstream components within the European Union, including highly specialised small and medium-sized businesses.

The Inflation Reduction Act is therefore a very strong pull factor to move investment and jobs to the US at the cost of partners and allies like the EU. This is counterproductive in terms of climate and sustainability outcomes. It's also a violation of international trade rules. But in a wider sense, it goes against the spirit of our transatlantic partnership. And we have made this clear with the Biden Administration.

Executive Vice-President Dombrovskis and I discussed this in clear terms during the Trenton Technology Council meeting with our counterparts, Secretary Blinken, Secretary Raimondo and Trade Representative Tai. It is fair to say that the Inflation Reduction Act was prominent in our discussions in Maryland last week. And as a result, we heard a clear statement from Secretary Blinken committing to address EU concerns, building on the comments by President Biden given a few days later.

But they also contended that any legislative changes would be difficult. So what we need to see now is that these political commitments made by the US, that they translate into concrete solutions in the implementation of the act to limit the damage as much as possible.

This is the aim of the task force which has been set up between the European Commission and the White House. It will continue working hard with the aim of seeing results by the end of this year, because that is also the timing for guidance of the US Treasury to implement the Inflation Reduction Act.

We already have war in Europe, the last thing we need is a trade war on top. Through the Trade and Technology Council, and in particular when you look at the work that we've been doing on semiconductors, well, we have shown that a collaborative transatlantic approach to industrial subsidies, that is possible. And this should be the guiding principles for these sectors, the green sectors, the clean-tech sectors that we are discussing as well.

While we keep working with our US partners to avoid negative consequences for Europe of the US Inflation Reduction Act, we need to continue pushing for Europe to become a decarbonised, low-energy-price continent. And for that to happen as soon as possible. The attainment of the Green Deal's objective for Europe to become a climate-neutral continent by 2050, that should not be put at risk.

The Green Deal is the European growth strategy, and we need to accompany our industries in meeting the ambitious targets. It is therefore of fundamental importance that the European Union stays an attractive place for innovation, for investment in sectors that are strategic to the green transition. Those are not all sectors. Those are specific sectors.

To facilitate this, just to face the energy crisis, as you well know, in March this year we put in place a temporary crisis framework. This enables Member States to help businesses that face extraordinary increases in energy prices, and we have been reviewing it constantly to ensure that it remains adapted to the needs of the business community. But in the current context, in the combination of huge price differences, the effects of the Inflation Reduction Act, we need to make sure that it is even simpler, even faster, even more targeted, while not losing sight of the need to preserve a level playing field to keep the single market together. And in this context, yesterday we launched a consultation of Member States in particular to seek their views on the following three issues.

First, how to further simplify the granting of aid for the rollout of renewable energy. Second, how to further simplify the granting of aid to decarbonise production processes of industry. And thirdly, whether it is necessary to support certain types of productive investment in strategic sectors for the green transition.

If supported by the result of the consultation of Member States, targeted adaptations of our temporary framework could serve as a bridge to real European solutions in the medium term. The whole of the EU, and not only the richest regions and Member States, should be able to preserve a strong industrial base. And that is why we need a European fund to complement existing instruments and to help ensure a fair green transition in all of Europe.

Finally, public support cannot do it all. Europe urgently needs to become a decarbonised, low-energy-price continent. State aid can be a short-term solution to the current challenges, but to be competitive on the world stage, we must make further efforts to remove single market barriers – barriers that unfortunately still exist.

With the RepowerEU plan we have together given a new impetus to the rollout of renewables. But more work is ahead of us to make the decarbonisation of our energy system happen fast and to bring the benefits of a high share of renewables in the energy mix to consumers in a lasting way.

President. – Before we come to the list of the group speakers, I just would like to ask colleagues the following: we need to be very disciplined concerning speaking time; the next point on our agenda is the Sakharov Prize ceremony and everybody should speak in this round, otherwise we have some problems with the catch-the-eye, so really stick to your speaking time, please.

Esther de Lange, *on behalf of the PPE Group*. – Madam President, three years ago in this room the Green Deal was compared to putting a man on the moon. And indeed at the time we were afraid that others would wreck our launch-pad through unfair competition. Now the US, with the Inflation Reduction Act, is building its own launchpad. And if we're not careful, they're beating us at our own game, with our approach, but better tools in their toolbox. And we shouldn't sit here and take it just because it's our friends, the Americans.

That's why the EPP welcomes the ideas put on the table by the Commission this morning. But we should do more. Rather than the immediate more-subsidies reflex, we should first redirect money remaining in existing funds to strategic infrastructure for key sectors. And this should be done cross-border – because let's be fair, this is what's lacking in the current funds. Our State aid and competition rules, it has been said, should become more strategic and more flexible, as should the upside process. And our budget, which is set in concrete for seven years, is of course not helping – there we need change and we urgently need own resources to address these new challenges.

And finally, if the talks that are ongoing and that are good with the US do not lead to results, we should not be afraid of standing up for more 'Made in Europe'. And on that note, Madam President, in time, I wish you all a very Merry Christmas and I am sure we will revisit this topic after the break.

Bernd Lange, *on behalf of the S&D Group*. – Madam President, Madam Executive Vice-President Margrethe, I guess, there's no doubt about it, we need a partnership with the United States in this time of trouble all round, on the green transition, on the war in Ukraine, as Margrethe said.

But, of course, partnerships need also trust. And my feeling at the moment, and I'm really sad about that, that the behaviour of the United States in the last two months is really a push away from a real good partnership.

'Might makes it right' might be the principle of some people in the United States, and this is really undermining our cooperation. Margrethe mentioned the very good cooperation at the TTC, but we need also good cooperation on the green transition and it should not lead to a substitute race. We should really stick to the international trading rules and we should defend this. We have a lot of tools in our toolbox to defend the rules-based trading system, and we should use them if the United States is not able to cooperate in a proper way.

Stéphanie Yon-Courtin, *au nom du groupe Renew*. – Madame la Présidente, chère Vice-Présidente exécutive Vestager, chers collègues, la loi sur la réduction de l'inflation impose un constat sans appel: l'OMC est au point mort; nos partenaires commerciaux privilégient leur économie.

Nous avons besoin d'un réveil européen. Les crises successives nous ont montré notre dépendance en médicaments, en matériaux ou en gaz. Dans ce contexte, nos partenaires investissent massivement pour protéger leur économie et leurs emplois. Nous l'avons rappelé plusieurs fois au sein de cet hémicycle: il faut réindustrialiser, numériser et décarboner notre économie pour regagner notre souveraineté européenne et mettre fin à nos dépendances. Cela ne doit pas rester un vœu pieux. Nos citoyens européens et nos entreprises européennes ne valent pas moins que les autres. Avec la législation sur les marchés numériques – le DMA – et le règlement sur les subventions étrangères, nous avons posé les bases de la fin de cette Europe naïve. Il est temps de nous donner les moyens d'atteindre les objectifs que nous nous sommes démocratiquement fixés.

Chers collègues, face au contexte actuel et aux réponses apportées par certains de nos partenaires étrangers, nous devons nous aussi protéger notre économie, nos emplois et nos ménages. Loin de nous recroqueviller sur nous-mêmes, redonnons à l'Union européenne sa place sur la scène des grandes puissances! L'Europe, ce marché de 460 millions de citoyens qui a su réagir, uni et en temps voulu, à la crise de la COVID-19 et à l'invasion en Ukraine, n'est pas une variable d'ajustement.

C'est mon souhait pour Noël: agissons ensemble d'urgence. Joyeux Noël!

Ernest Urtasun, *on behalf of the Verts/ALE Group*. – Madam President, the US Inflation Reduction Act has caught the EU unprepared and has also exposed the limitations of our economic policy. Times are changing and we know that the building-up of a new green and social contract will require greater involvement of public authorities in investment and market intervention. But, on the other hand, we need to size well the risks that the US measures pose for the EU in terms of competitiveness. The US wants to accelerate the Green Transition and this is most welcome, but we should also urge the US to respect fair economic cooperation. Unless we react, this package can make the US out-compete European players in the new economy.

The EU should reflect, then, firstly on how to build its own industrial push through a genuine European package. That should include, as has been mentioned this morning: a reform of state-aid rules – we are very much looking for that; the establishment of new investment instruments – and that is why we want to reiterate our call for a new EU Sovereignty Fund to accelerate the Green Transition; and also a swift adoption of the reform of our fiscal rules with a view to establishing a permanent fiscal capacity.

The EU, however, should also have the ambition of pushing this package in cooperation, not competition, with our global partners. That is why we believe that the EU should engage in the framework of the G20 in a coordinated investment push that would avoid – because this is also important – an endless round of WTO disputes.

Gunnar Beck, *on behalf of the ID Group*. – Madam President, the US Inflation Reduction Act is a misnomer. The Federal Reserve is taking care of inflation and, unlike the ECB, appears to be succeeding.

The act itself is promoting new energies, including nuclear energy. But, above all, it is a protectionist measure to promote US industry and to attract foreign and especially EU investment because soaring inflation and energy costs weaken EU-based producers.

The EU's response has been predictably weak. EU leaders are appealing to the US not to put America first, while they are putting Europe last. The EU is using COVID-19 and the Ukraine war to accelerate its own self-destructive climate change and pro-migration policies, which make us a laughing stock of the whole world. The Chinese even have a word for it, *baizuo*, Europe's 'woke' ideology, which compulsively draws us to self-destruction in the way a moth is drawn to and consumed by the flame.

Europe has recovered from two World Wars, but we will not recover from *baizuo* unless we face the reality of our decline and put our economic interest and our own people first. For, as Immanuel Kant said, 'ought implies can' and, as Machiavelli noted before, we often have to make tragic choices between saving ourselves or others: it is called the truth.

Geert Bourgeois, *namens de ECR-Fractie*. – Voorzitter, mevrouw de vicevoorzitter, ik heb aandachtig naar u geluisterd. Ik heb gisteren ook uw opinie gelezen in onder andere de Vlaamse krant De Tijd. Succes met de taskforce die opgericht is. Ik hoop dat u er werkelijk in slaagt om de discriminatie van Europese bedrijven weg te werken.

Maar we hebben inderdaad ook Europees huiswerk. Akkoord met staatssteun voor zover die is gericht op innovatie, op hernieuwbare energie, op excellentie of bij marktfalen.

Maar uw tijdelijk crisiskader schept heel grote problemen, haalt het gelijke speelveld onderuit. Lees in dezelfde krant De Tijd de noodkreet van grote Vlaamse bedrijven, zoals Unilin, zoals Kronos, Aluminium Duffel. Zij kunnen niet concurreren tegen grote bedrijven uit grote lidstaten die genieten van massale staatssteun, en zij dreigen met sluiting geconfronteerd te worden.

Het vertrouwen in de EU zakt op die manier weg. Herstel het snel.

Helmut Scholz, *im Namen der Fraktion The Left*. – Frau Präsidentin, Frau Vizepräsidentin! Im Unterschied zu vielen Meinungen hier oder in der europäischen Industrie, die einen Wirtschaftskrieg heraufziehen sehen und irgendwie von der US-Regierung tief enttäuscht sind, meine ich: Wir sollten dem im September 2022 beschlossenen Gesetzespaket zur industriepolitischen Erneuerung unsere Anerkennung zollen, auch wenn ich den Grundsatz „America first!" mehr als fraglich finde.

Worum geht es? Die Democrats haben es endlich geschafft, ein großes Investitionspaket für mehr Klimaschutz und erneuerbare Energien durch den Kongress zu bringen. Um das zu erreichen, musste die Regierung Biden/Harris die Schaffung von Arbeitsplätzen und den Klimaschutz in Einklang bringen – übrigens eine Kernforderung der Linken weltweit.

Die große US-amerikanische Verbraucherinnen- und Verbraucherschutzorganisation PublicCitizen, die Gewerkschaften und viele andere klatschen. Wer die Industriebrachen in der USA gesehen hat, der versteht, dass das ganze Land eine nachhaltige Reindustrialisierung benötigt. Die soll nun angeschoben werden, und zwar mit gewaltigen Mitteln und in genau jenen Technologiebereichen, die auch wir in Europa für die nachhaltige Transformation unserer Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft benötigen.

Wir müssen deshalb selbst in der EU Geld in die Hand nehmen und investieren, statt zu jammern und zu fordern, auch europäischen Unternehmen freien Zugang zu Subventionen aus dem Geld amerikanischer Steuerzahlerinnen und Steuerzahler zu gewähren. Im Kern geht es doch um die Neuaufstellung von Industrie- und Wirtschaftspolitik, und zwar mit Blick auf globale Notwendigkeiten. *Greening economies* – gute Arbeit, also *just green transition*.

Es ist richtig und notwendig, Klimapolitik mit Industriepolitik zu verbinden. Die 430 Milliarden scheinen gut investiert und sollen den USA eine Chance eröffnen, bei der Entwicklung entscheidender Technologien einen Spitzenrang zu erringen. China investiert in gleichem Maße. Wir sollten ihnen nacheifern und deshalb ebenfalls sofort einige 100 - Milliarden Euro in die Entwicklung von Technologien und endlich auch in Europa in deren Marktreife und Produktion investieren.

Milan Uhrík (NI). – Nikdy nezabudnem na ten smutný pohľad, keď americký prezident Biden z Bieleho domu oznamoval, že Amerika nedovolí Európe postaviť plynovod medzi Ruskom a Nemeckom, plynovod Nord Stream. Nemecký kancelár Scholz tam vedľa neho vtedy len ticho stál a šúchal nohami. Priatelia, toto bol pohľad na obraz zrazenej Európy. Američania nám povedali, aby sme prijali energetické sankcie. Európa vykonala, poslúchla a trpí. Potom Američania povedali, že nám budú predávať trojnásobne drahý LNG plyn. Európa poslúchla a platí. Teraz Američania povedali, že budú zvýhodňovať domácich výrobcov, vlastných amerických, a znevýhodňovať tým pádom európskych. A Európa sa len ticho prizerá a mlčí. Pripájam sa k výzvam kolegov, aby vedenie Európskej únie konečne rázne a rozhodne podporilo európsky priemysel. To, že mnohí v Bruseli slúžia americkým záujmom, to už všetci vieme. Ale teraz je naozaj najvyšší čas postaviť sa konečne aj za tú našu Európu, za náš európsky priemysel.

Christophe Hansen (PPE). – Madam President, Executive Vice-President, Minister, the Inflation Reduction Act could have the unintended consequence of increasing our dependency on China as our companies might turn to less reliable alternatives if they are cut out of the American supply chains. This is a reality that President Biden and his administration also needs to acknowledge.

But we have alternatives to a subsidy race to shore up the competitiveness of our industry and ensure access to critical raw materials needed for the green transition in Europe. We need to deliver – and we need to deliver now – on free trade agreements that are ready to go, and work on strategic partnerships quicker than ever. The most efficient way to react to the Inflation Reduction Act is to conclude and to ratify, during this legislative term, the agreements with Mexico, Chile, Australia, New Zealand, and not forgetting about Mercosur.

A trade war or a harmful race to the bottom in subsidies, picking winners or losers, is a recipe that has never worked before and is not the way forward. It would weaken our alliances and make our enemies only rejoice.

Miapetra Kumpula-Natri (S&D). – Madam President, dear Commissioner and Minister Bek, it's overwhelmingly positive that finally the USA is also investing in climate change and engaging for these actions in the Inflation Reduction Act, just as we debated with the colleagues ten days ago in the Congress. Also we see that the third TTC Ministerial was also positive on its concrete outcomes, on digital infrastructure and charging point standardisation among others, and also the new labour dialogue.

However, the unintended consequences of this act, the Inflation Reduction Act, undermine this good work. The Inflation Reduction Act design seriously risks drawing investments away from Europe to the USA, and it violates US international trade commitments. If there is no satisfactory solution very soon, the EU response must be swift and it must at the same time respect the principles of our single market, the most powerful tool for our economy and global standing, with the right balance and targeted support for future-proof industries, we should establish retail and supply chains with like-minded allies and lay down the foundation of our own strategic autonomy, alongside – and not against – transatlantic allies.

Dita Charanzová (Renew). – Madam President, Madam Executive Vice-President, while the US and Europe are like-minded partners, both as democracies, but also economically, the Inflation Reduction Act threatens to undermine this partnership. Even if we don't have a trade agreement with the US, which I wish we had, we have many national and sectoral agreements. European vehicles must be seen as equivalent to American assembled vehicles. But the Inflation Reduction Act has larger consequences. It's a protectionist step which will launch a subsidy spiral between nations.

Less than 30 years ago, we created the WTO to ensure disputes were settled by discussions instead of trade wars. Yet here we go. However frustrated we are in this moment, it should not blind us to the value that free trade brings to Europe, that free trade brings to the European citizens. Let us not join the race to the bottom without thinking first.

Reinhard Bütikofer (Verts/ALE). – Madam President, Executive Vice-President, Minister, the protectionist way in which the United States is pushing the dearly-needed green transition of their own economy hurts our interests. Our friends and partners in the United States are deviating important investment from the European to the US markets, thus effectively promoting European deindustrialisation somewhat, even if unintended. That runs counter to our shared interest, also to their own. And it has effects beyond just the economic dimension because it contributes to a creeping crisis of trust.

Of course, I wish you well, Executive Vice-President, with the talks that you have ahead of you, but I will still reserve judgment as to what can effectively be done in the negotiations. So we have to focus on what we can do ourselves. I certainly support the reform of state aid rules. I think we should invest together, as Ernest Urtasun has emphasised, in a smart, fair and WTO-compatible way. And we should also go back to looking at the fragmentation that still exists in the single market and try to overcome that. One thing we should not do: we should not retaliate against protectionism with our own protectionism.

Zdzisław Krasnodębski (ECR). – Pani Przewodnicząca! Ja się zgadzam, że przedsiębiorstwa amerykańskie w Europie powinny być traktowane tak jak europejskie przedsiębiorstwa w Stanach Zjednoczonych. Konkurencja powinna być fair, ale czy konkurencja fair jest także zagwarantowana w samej Unii? 370 mld pomocy państwa w USA nam przeszkadza, 200 mld w Niemczech, te „Doppelwumms" Olafa Scholza – już nie. Czy nie jest to naruszenie zasady równości konkurencji wewnątrz Unii?

Troska o dezindustrializację Europy jest jak najbardziej uzasadniona. Ale czy to niebezpieczeństwo jest tylko wynikiem amerykańskiego aktu zwalczania inflacji, czy też wieloletniej polityki Unii, błędnej polityki energetycznej oraz faktu, że cała gospodarka została podporządkowana zbyt wyśrubowanym celom klimatycznym?

Jérôme Rivière (NI). – Madame la Présidente, dans cette assemblée, où le mot *protectionnisme* est banni au point d'être considéré comme une grossièreté, on s'étonne qu'un pays, les États-Unis en l'occurrence, puisse protéger son industrie, ses emplois et ses habitants. C'est pourtant la mission première d'un État.

Comme à chaque fois, l'Union européenne idéalise la relation transatlantique, alors que l'approche américaine est avant tout pragmatique. Le président français, Emmanuel Macron, s'est rendu aux États-Unis pour dire à Joe Biden tout le mal qu'il pensait de cette loi sur la réduction de l'inflation. Naïveté ou jeu d'acteur? Un échec, en tout cas.

Nous sommes une fois de plus traités sans considération. L'Union européenne, ayatollah isolé du libre-échange immodéré, expose ainsi nos entreprises à une concurrence déséquilibrée, fragilisant notre tissu économique, nos emplois et le niveau de vie de nos concitoyens. Le fonds de souveraineté européen que veut mettre en place Thierry Breton est un leurre qui ne protégera pas suffisamment nos économies nationales.

Il est temps d'en finir avec ce dogme du libre-échange incontrôlé. Protégeons nos économies. Retrouvons le chemin d'un protectionnisme, que nous sommes le seul espace économique à avoir abandonné sur la planète.

Markus Ferber (PPE). – Frau Präsidentin, liebe Kolleginnen, liebe Kollegen! Die europäische Wirtschaft steht vor enormen Herausforderungen. Kurzfristig sind es natürlich die hohen Energiekosten und die unterbrochenen Lieferketten, langfristig die Transformation hin zu einem kohlenstofffreien Wirtschaftsmodell.

Wir hätten in Europa also auch ohne das US-Anti-Inflations-Gesetz bereits genug zu tun. Deswegen können wir es nicht akzeptieren, wenn durch hohe Subventionen und eine *Buy-American*-Klausel das Fundament unserer europäischen Wirtschaft untergraben wird. Was können wir tun? Ich denke, wir sind uns einig, dass wir einen Handelskrieg derzeit nicht gebrauchen können. Deswegen sollte eine Lösung auf dem Verhandlungsweg angestrebt werden, möglichst schnell, Frau Vizepräsidentin.

Eine WTO-Klage oder Strafzölle sollten wir aber nicht ausschließen. Alle Optionen müssen auch auf den Tisch gebracht werden. Eins ist aber klar: Die Antwort auf das US-Anti-Inflations-Gesetz kann nicht in einem neuen EU-Souveränitätsfonds bestehen. Was so unschuldig daherkommt, ist nichts anderes als ein neuer Schuldentopf, auch wenn die Kommission das vielleicht anders sieht. Durch neue Schulden werden wir nicht souveräner.

Aurore Lalucq (S&D). – Madame la Présidente, Madame la Vice-Présidente exécutive, il aura fallu seulement trois lettes pour faire trembler l'Europe: IRA *[Inflation Reduction Act]*. Trois lettres pour que notre continent perde ses repères; trois lettres pour que le continent du pacte vert pour l'Europe, dans un premier temps, condamne l'ambitieux plan de transition écologique de l'une des économies les plus polluantes du monde; trois lettres pour que l'Europe panique, s'affole et pleurniche, allant même demander aux États-Unis de modifier leur plan.

Pardon, mais respectons-nous un peu. Déjà, au lieu de pleurnicher, réjouissons-nous que les États-Unis souhaitent réduire leurs émissions de gaz à effet de serre de 50 % d'ici 2030. En fait, si nous paniquons, c'est parce que nous nous rendons compte, finalement, que l'Union européenne s'est fondée sur un logiciel pseudo-économique qui est en train de mourir de sa belle mort, et que, certes, il faut avoir une politique de défense vis-à-vis de la concurrence, mais que, pour faire de la politique industrielle et de la transition écologique, il nous faut des subventions, il nous faut de la planification, il nous faut des pouvoirs publics forts et il faut parfois protéger ces industries.

Alors, certes, l'Europe a un deuil à faire, mais qu'elle le fasse vite, car la politique industrielle et la transition écologique n'attendent pas.

Eva Maria Poptcheva (Renew). – Madam President, Executive Vice-President Vestager, Minister Bek, the US Inflation Reduction Act is good news and bad news at the same time. It's good news that the world's largest economy joins the EU in investing in the green transition. It is bad news though that it does so by breaching the principles of the World Trade Organization and breaking the bonds of trust between two strong partners.

Many now propose doing the same here in the European Union, but we need to stop reacting to what the US is doing and take the lead ourselves and do it our way. We need to develop a smart strategy which avoids fragmentation of the single market, and I would propose a legislative package based on three main aspects.

First, we should make our economies more competitive by creating a favourable environment for business and innovation, and there are a lot of concrete things that we can do there. Second, we must invest in strategic sectors where the EU can still achieve a competitive advantage by fostering research and innovation. Third, we must defend free trade and diversify our trading partners. Colleagues, it is not about reacting to the Inflation Reduction Act. It's time for our own strategy towards a European competitive advantage.

Bas Eickhout (Verts/ALE). – Madam President, and also thank you very much Commissioner for your very clear outline on the response of Europe to the American Inflation Reduction Act. And I very much agree with your point that we need a decarbonised, low energy price continent, that that is the aim, and also very much how much there also investments are needed for that, we have to look at state aid.

But this also means homework for all of us. Homework certainly also for the Council. Tomorrow you are meeting together with the heads of state, so you have now finally to discuss a European fund because this is one of the responses that we need and this should be high on the agenda now of the European leaders. But also, more close to home, this also means that, for example, the Council should move towards a much bigger innovation fund when we are talking about revenues coming from the ETS. We will have a final trilogue maybe on Friday, Saturday, maybe Sunday. What is the Council going to do? Is it going to lower the innovation fund again? That's going against the will of more investments.

But there is also homework for the Commission. If you are afraid that we in the end do not have enough public money, then you also need to come up with more proposals on ending fossil subsidies. You have to come forward with proposals on the taxonomy, also looking at the non-sustainable investments and not only green investments. And if you are afraid that the money will go from households to shareholders, do come up with a reform of the corporate governance moving away from shareholder capitalism. That's homework for the Commission as well.

Alexandr Vondra (ECR). – Paní předsedající, my několik let přemlouvám Spojené státy, aby si udělaly taky *Green Deal*. Konečně to udělaly a nám se to nelíbí, protože to udělaly po svém, více kapitalisticky, daňovými odpočty, které snižují cenu, nikoliv regulacemi a příkazy, které cenu zvyšují, jak se to děje tady. V Čechách tomu říkáme: když se dlouho chodí se džbánem pro vodu, tak se ucho utrhne. Nám se to samozřejmě nelíbí, protože to porušuje pravidla WTO, ale když tady roky upozorňujeme, že CBAM, který tady chystáme, porušuje pravidla WTO taky, a když upozorňujeme na to, že Američanům se to nelíbí, tak tady máme výsledek. Zase v Čechách říkáme: jak se do lesa volá, tak se z lesa ozývá. Čili ano, zabraňme obchodním válkám, na kterých nikdo nevydělá, ale musíme začít především sami u sebe.

Tiziana Beghin (NI). – Signora Presidente, onorevoli colleghi, sono stata a Washington una settimana fa e, insieme a molti colleghi, abbiamo ripetutamente evidenziato ai nostri interlocutori americani che la nuova legge statunitense sull'inflazione viola le regole dell'OMC e avrà impatti gravissimi sulle imprese europee.

Molte delle sovvenzioni verdi che saranno introdotte in America discriminano pesantemente le industrie europee più virtuose e avanzate: parlo delle nostre case automobilistiche, dei costruttori di sistemi per le energie rinnovabili, di chi fabbrica batterie, di altre industrie ad alta intensità energetica dell'Unione europea, ma soprattutto parlo di migliaia di posti di lavoro europei in pericolo.

Non solo questa legge mette le aziende europee in una posizione di svantaggio rispetto alle rivali a stelle e strisce, ma le norme sugli aiuti di Stato vigenti da noi, nella normativa nella sua forma attuale, impediscono ai paesi membri di fare altrettanto e di offrire agevolazioni fiscali ugualmente generose alle proprie aziende. Quindi, oltre al danno, la beffa.

Dobbiamo avere il coraggio di dire agli americani che questo non è aiutare l'industria interna, ma fare vera e propria concorrenza sleale, per giunta a un alleato storico come l'Europa, e dobbiamo far capire loro che questo alleato non intende stare a guardare e, su questo, mi auguro che veramente non stia a guardare.

Christian Ehler (PPE). – *(start of speech off mic)* … the Inflation Reduction Act is a systematic challenge for the Green Deal. It's an alternative to the Green Deal because we never delivered on the deal part of the Green Deal. We are regulating our industry. We are co-creating the regulation. This House is part of that exercise, but we are not investing to ensure in the business case for the transition. That's what the Inflation Reduction Act is doing. The Inflation Reduction Act creates a business case for a sustainable transition. It offers an industry a deal, and our only possible reaction to it is to become furious about the deal part of the Green Deal.

Madam Commissioner, we thought you to be too intelligent to announce yet another fund. I think we have to have a better understanding of the complex transnational, sectoral ecosystems of the industry affected by the Inflation Reduction Act. We need to step up investment in innovation and develop real transition pathways for our industries. We need to mobilise all unspent cohesion funds from the previous MFF to invest in our industrial transition. We need to invest more in energy and mobility infrastructure and deepen our European market. We have to care about the deal and not steer towards America. Let's get serious about the deal part of the Green Deal.

Dan Nica (S&D). – Doamnă președintă, doamnă vicepreședintă Vestager, domnule ministru Bek, vreau să vă spun că este nevoie, după ce am văzut cu toții care pot fi consecințele războiului dus de către Rusia în Ucraina, de acțiuni pe care trebuie să luăm în Uniunea Europeană.

Am văzut cât de rău ne este când am constatat că ne lipsesc elemente esențiale din partea industriei Uniunii Europene, cum ar fi: nu avem cipuri, nu avem suficiente capacități de producție pe regenerabile.

Avem o nevoie de a păstra industria europeană a oțelului, a aluminiului, pentru că, atunci când avem nevoie de ele, am constatat că toate aceste lucruri lipsesc. Răspunsul Uniunii Europene trebuie să fie unul simplu: avem nevoie de un fond de suveranitate, avem nevoie de bani ca să putem să păstrăm industriile esențiale, strategice, critice în Uniunea Europeană.

Avem nevoie să continuăm acest proces *fast permittivity*. Nu o să putem concura pe cipuri nici cu Statele Unite, nici cu China, la câți bani aruncă și câți bani alocă ei. Dar, în schimb, putem să le spunem: veniți în Uniunea Europeană că avem un climat de afaceri prietenos, vă dăm permisele de construcție foarte repede, vă dăm acele ajutoare de stat în condiții foarte rapide, în conformitate cu legea, pentru că înțelegem nevoia de a supraviețui și noi, ca Uniunea Europeană, și toți cei care lucrează în industria Uniunii Europene.

Vă mulțumesc și succes, doamnă vicepreședinte !

Spontane Wortmeldungen

Henna Virkkunen (PPE). – Madam President, President of the Council, Vice-President, I need to say that I am very concerned over the competitiveness of European industry. We have been far too dependent on energy supplies from outside of Europe, and now the energy crisis and increased energy prices are placing a heavy burden on our industry. At the same time, we know that the population of the EU is ageing and companies are struggling to have access to a skilled workforce. The Green and Digital Transition require a new type of skills. For that reason, we need to invest in education and skills as well as in research and development, much more than we have done.

At the same time, we need to ensure that our regulations are encouraging innovations and investments in Europe. I am expecting the Commission to take this matter seriously and to abstain from introducing any new legislation that increases the administrative burden and costs for European industry and for our SMEs.

Mick Wallace (The Left). – Madam President, the US Inflation Reduction Act is essentially a protectionist package attempting to rejuvenate the US manufacturing industry by drawing companies to the US with subsidies and tax breaks, and giving existing US companies an advantage over the EU and others.

I'm surprised that the EU is surprised. America has been engaging in protectionism for over the last hundred years and they use it to their advantage as they see fit. And they've used the IMF and the World Bank to make sure that others don't engage in it when it damages US interests. Now, I think we're a bit taken aback by it because we're already suffering from America taking advantage of the war. We're supporting a US-NATO proxy war. They're charging us four times more for their gas than they're charging their own. And they're giving themselves another advantage there.

Henry Kissinger once said, 'America doesn't have friends or enemies. It has interests.' And it's about time that the EU copped on to themselves and started living a more independent existence from the US.

Enikő Győri (NI). – Elnök Asszony! Ez a törvény egy újabb oldalvágás Európa felé, és senkinek ne legyen illúziója, az USA-val szövetségesek vagyunk, de gazdasági versenytársak is. Az Unió vezetői végre ismerjék fel, hogy az energiahelyzet, a szankciók és az amerikai gazdaságpolitika mind a mi versenyképességünket rontja. Mára egyértelmű, hogy az USA nem fogja megváltoztatni a törvényt, nem fogja mentesíteni az európai cégeket. Lehetőségeink korlátozottak, ha nem akarunk kereskedelmi háborút. Importvámot bevezetni nem lenne összhangban a WTO-val, pereskedni időigényes, és a cégeink, mire jogorvoslatot kapunk, már rég áttelepültek az USA-ba.

A tagállami szubvenciók egyenlőtlen helyzetet teremtenének az EU-ban a gazdagok és szegények között. Mit kell tenni? Végre hozzuk tető alá a függőben levő szabadkereskedelmi egyezményeket, gondoljuk újra az Unió állami támogatási rendszerét. Nehézkes és lassú szabályok helyett beruházásbarát környezetre van szükségünk.

Végezetül pedig, ha a Bizottság egy új alapot akar létrehozni, remélem, azt nem adósságból kívánja megteremteni. És nagyon fontos még, hogy megszabaduljunk a saját bürokrácianövelő, kkv-kat megnyomorító szabályainktól.

Massimiliano Salini (PPE). – Signora Presidente, onorevoli colleghi, la decisione di non ridimensionare le ambizioni europee in materia di sostenibilità e in materia anche di fair play commerciale a livello globale sono comprensibili, nonostante l'affronto ricevuto dalle misure destinate alla riduzione dell'inflazione proposte dagli Stati Uniti d'America.

Ma la condizione per cui noi ci si possa permettere di non ridurre le nostre ambizioni è che, al contempo, l'Europa decida di proteggere non in termini protezionistici, ma in termini reali, economici, i propri prodotti sui mercati globali. Possiamo rimanere ambiziosi, ma al contempo non dobbiamo lasciare da soli i nostri imprenditori nella sfida globale.

Per questo è molto sbagliato che sulla CBAM si decida di non occuparsi di export e per cui è auspicabile che nei negoziati sugli ETS, che si concluderanno venerdì, il tema dell'export entri nelle misure su cui l'Europa, che tiene le proprie ambizioni alte, deve decidere di non tenerle solo a tutela dei politici che le raccontano, ma anche delle imprese che esportano.

Clare Daly (The Left). – Madam President, the worst is yet to come, so said the IMF in October. Europe's economies are being decimated by sanctions. Millions of Europeans are going to have to decide between heating and eating this winter. People in Poland are burning rubbish to keep warm and the lights are winking out in German industry.

The Russians are laughing at us. The Americans are laughing at us. And I wouldn't blame them, because when Europe decided to go to war, it ended up cutting its own throat. And then we have the Inflation Reduction Act – a coup de grâce from the US to a Europe that it knows is bleeding. So much for our like-minded partners. They're doing what they always do: putting America first. That's the business they're in.

But what is the response of the EU? Nothing. We're too busy shooting ourselves in both feet, failing to try and secure an end to the war while the US charges us four times the price for energy, having made us dependent. In a modern war, the only winner is global capital; ordinary people always lose. We should remember that the next time we talk about peace being treason.

Henrike Hahn (Verts/ALE). – Madam President, on both sides of the Atlantic we need green transition and a green, decarbonised economy. And we neither want a trade war over the Inflation Reduction Act nor a subsidy race. And yes, the WTO can check the Inflation Reduction Act, but what we need especially is a transatlantic climate alliance and quick decisions to strengthen the green European industry.

Therefore, let's talk about carbon contracts for difference. The first German CCfD will be granted in 2023, and we need those instruments at EU level as well. For that, we have to increase the ETS Innovation Fund and shift its focus from technology innovation to technology diffusion.

And let's talk about state aid. We need simpler rules and faster procedures for companies, but not at ecological costs or risking the integrity of the internal market. So Europe's industry needs can, of course, profit from the first-of-a-kind add-on to existing state rules, and we are currently working on the EU Chips Act.

And let's talk about the Sovereignty Fund. We need a European coordinated approach to support private and public investment in green industries. But if we want an EU Sovereignty Fund, we also need to speed up the introduction of EU own resources because we need sufficient revenue sources.

(Ende der spontanen Wortmeldungen)

Margrethe Vestager, *Executive Vice-President of the Commission*. – Madam President, thank you very much for the discipline, and thank you all so very much for a debate that has, I think, covered basically every corner, every possible idea, every possible view of Europe. I've heard Europe described as waning, as weak, as without focus, as with no targets. So please allow me to tell how I see it.

We have in Europe set a direction. We know where we want to go. We want to be a green, decarbonised continent. We want to use digital solutions to create societies where people feel at home. We have set a direction. In my opinion, we have done that together. Because one can go nowhere without knowing where you want to go. And this is, of course, why we have done so many things in order to get there.

We have survived the pandemic. And not only that, we have for the first time created a gigantic facility. We have taken steps together. The Recovery and Resilience Facility, with the plans of every Member State of investing in green and in digital transition – that is part of the answer. Next year will be a year of skills, hopefully as fast as possible because, as said by some today, we need that. Without the knowledge, without the skills, without knowing what to do, Europe will not be able to achieve where we want to go.

We have Horizon Europe, the biggest, most ambitious research programme on this planet that can take us to where we want to go in basically every field. And also in the most emerging technologies: what comes beyond 5G and 6G? Where will we want to go in quantum? The most amazing research projects translating into innovation, into businesses.

And the thing is, we know where we want to go, now circumstances are changing. And the good news is that someone wants to join us in fighting climate change. And when circumstances change, we adapt. We do not change, we do not shiver, because we know where we want to go. And I think that adaptation is really important.

And the thing that we can do on a very, very short-term basis is not to reform what we believe in when it comes to state aid, but to adapt to give Member States clear options to support strategic sectors and to do it really fast. And really fast is not after long, long, long processes. Really fast is to get it started by mid-January.

And the reason why this is so important is that investment decisions, they are taken now. That is why this signal – that Member States want to stand up to ensure that it is as attractive to invest in Europe, to stay in Europe, to be part of the supply chains in Europe that create millions and millions of jobs – that is of the essence.

But obviously, this is not enough because Member States are different. I completely agree that we should look at every fund we have. What is not being used can be reused for strategic investment. That is a prudent approach to taxpayers' funding. But the reason why the adaptation of state aid rules must be temporary is that state aid is a direct transfer from taxpayers to shareholders, and that is 100% legitimate if there is something in it for the taxpayer – here, greening of our economy, greening of our society, jobs to maintain in Europe.

But in the long term, obviously European industry should be competitive by itself. And this is why the fund is important. This is why the greening is important. This is why the celebration of the 30 years of the single market should be a *tour d'horizon* of our competitiveness – to see that there are more adjustments that we need to make in order to be fully competitive. But the starting point of competitive European industry is a well-functioning single market and competition that drives innovation so that everyone knows that it's not the taxpayers picking up the bills; it's taxpayers investing where there is a strategic sector that needs that investment.

That is the important thing. That is the plan that we have laid out. That is a plan that can be triggered with a very, very short time horizon. And that is important to ensure that when we achieve our strategic targets, we do that with sufficient flexibility to adjust to a change of circumstance around us so that we will fight climate change, but we will do that by also enabling our industrial strategy.

And that industrial strategy has set the aim for European industry to be leaders when it comes to green and when it comes to digital. That is not a Europe that is weak. That is a Europe that builds on its strengths and does that with partners and with allies, because this is our interest and this is how we serve Europeans.

Mikuláš Bek, *President-in-Office of the Council*. – Madam President, honourable Members, Vice-President of the Commission. Thank you for this debate.

Europe needs to reflect on how we can act collectively and reflect on all the possible tools we can display to make sure we remain resilient and competitive.

The European Council will have a very timely opportunity to give political guidance on possible actions. Serious efforts for finding credible solutions are underway. We must keep engaging with the US at many levels and allow the ongoing talks with our US partners to run their course

In parallel, however, we also need to do our homework. We will need to be ready to react if necessary once the Inflation Reduction Act is in place at the beginning of next year, while putting a strong emphasis on avoiding a trade war with the US at this particularly delicate geostrategic moment.

President. – Thank you very much, personally and on behalf of this House, for your committed work during the presidency.

Die Aussprache ist geschlossen.

Schriftliche Erklärungen (Artikel 171)

Marek Belka (S&D), *in writing*. – The Inflation Reduction Act was presented in a positive way in the US – it is supposed to curb inflation, deal with taxation and focus on green energy. Nevertheless, one can perceive that the Inflation Reduction Act is based on unfair cooperation with America's partners – such as the EU. I will name only few examples of how the Inflation Reduction Act might undermine the European-American friendship.

First, the US ties its subsidies and tax breaks exclusively to the production of raw materials, intermediate products and complete production in the US or in North America, undermining the WTO agreements. Second, the minimum tax of 15%, deviates from the international OECD negotiations. It weakens the deal by not being a truly effective tax rate, giving a wrong example and making more countries adopt tax credits or engage in aggressive competition to grant subsidies to companies to 'compensate' for higher effective tax rates. This is not what we all fought for. True friendship is about transparency, cooperation and facing challenges together. I call on the Commission to take steps in the discussions with the US. I hope that soon we will not have to quote yesterday's birthday child Taylor Swift when discussing US-EU relations: 'So take a look at what you've done. Now we've got bad blood.'

Marc Botenga (The Left), *par écrit*. – Chers collègues, pourriez-vous maintenant sortir de la naïveté vis-à-vis des États-Unis d'Amérique, à qui vous faites généralement aveuglément confiance? Parce qu'à un moment où la guerre sévit sur le continent européen, les États-Unis non seulement en profitent pour nous vendre leurs cargaisons de gaz GNL à des prix absolument ridicules, avec jusqu'à 200 millions de dollars de profits par cargaison, mais en plus… ils adoptent une loi qui a clairement comme objectif d'affaiblir l'économie européenne. Ce n'est pas le comportement qu'aurait un véritable allié. Alors comment réagir ? Les solutions libérales sont «has been». Obsolètes. Qui peut encore croire qu'en inondant le secteur privé d'argent, nous allons nous en sortir? Face à l'échec des libéralisations européennes, qui ont échoué à garantir des prix de l'énergie bas, échoué à garantir la transition climatique sociale, échoué à garantir l'emploi, il est temps de changer les règles du jeu, de garantir que le profit des grandes multinationales ne soit plus le fil conducteur des décisions politiques européennes. Acceptons que certains secteurs sont trop importants pour être laissés dans les mains du marché. Prenons en main publiquement des secteurs stratégiques comme l'énergie, le transport, les médicaments, le numérique, etc. Faisons le switch.

(Die Sitzung wird um 11.53 Uhr bis zur Verleihung des Sacharow-Preises für einige Minuten unterbrochen.)

PRESIDENZA: ROBERTA METSOLA

President

5. Wiederaufnahme der Sitzung

(The sitting resumed at 12:06)

6. Verleihung des Sacharow-Preises (feierliche Sitzung)

President. – Dear Laureates of the 2022 Sakharov Prize for Freedom of Thought, dear Ambassador Chentsov and Ambassador Tarasyuk, dear Oleksandra, Yuliia, Ivan, Oleksandr, Stanislav and Yaroslav, representing the brave people of Ukraine, dear 2022 Sakharov Prize finalists, dear colleagues, it is my privilege to welcome you all to the European Parliament for the 2022 Sakharov Prize Award ceremony.

Since 1988, the Sakharov Prize for Freedom of Thought has paid tribute to people and organisations that fight in the name of freedom around the world. A fight that is synonymous with the legacy of scientist and Russian dissident, Andrei Sakharov, after whom this prize is named. Andrei Sakharov firmly believed in a world of open, free and democratic societies. The same belief that underpins our way of European life.

It was Andrei Sakharov himself that once said: 'A country which does not respect the rights of its own citizens will not respect the rights of its neighbours.' This is a message that remains as relevant as ever. That is why in 2020, this European Parliament awarded the Sakharov Prize to the Belarusian democratic opposition represented by the leader of the Belarusian democratic movement, Sviatlana Tsikhanouskaya and political activist Veranika Tsapkala.

To this day, Belarus holds the appalling record of having the highest number of Sakharov Prize laureates in prison. This is also why, in 2021, the European Parliament awarded the Sakharov Prize to Russian opposition leader Alexey Navalny for his fight against the Kremlin's abuse. And here again, I take the opportunity to call for his immediate and unconditional release.

(Applause)

Our message is that we will not forget them. We will not forget any of our Sakharov Prize laureates who are still paying the price for freedom. This year, we meet to honour our 2022 Sakharov Prize laureates: the brave people of Ukraine represented by their President, elected leaders, and civil society. Ukrainians who have already fought hard and sacrificed so much for their freedom and our values.

And so as an introduction to this award ceremony, I invite you all to watch a short video on the laureates of the Sakharov Prize for Freedom of Thought.

(A video was shown in the Chamber)

Dear friends, today marks the 293rd day of war in Ukraine. We have witnessed the inspiring resistance of ordinary citizens making the ultimate sacrifice to delay a column of tanks. Senior citizens standing up to face down Russian troops with nothing but pride as their weapons. Brave women forced to give birth in underground metro stations.

To these people, the message from Europe has been clear: we stand with Ukraine. We will not look away. The Ukrainian people are not just fighting a war of independence but fighting a war of values – the values which underpin our life in the European Union and that we have long had the luxury of taking for granted each and every day.

We often speak about democracy, freedom, liberty as if they were some abstract concepts that do not really translate into much in practice. But the ability to vote for who we believe in, to read independent journalism, to assemble and to say what we want to say, to disagree and dissent, to pursue whatever gives us the most happiness in life, to live and love as we choose without consequences, these are what democracy, freedom, liberty mean. And the Ukrainian people deserve to have that too.

(Applause)

This is why I went to Kyiv, to assure President Zelenskyy and everyone in the Verkhovna Rada that this European Parliament will stand alongside Ukraine in this fight. This is why we sent financial, humanitarian and military aid to Ukraine and why we will continue to send more. This is why we adopted eight – and soon nine – hard-hitting packages of sanctions against Putin and his enablers and continue to amplify your calls to have Russia pay for its war crimes. This is why we granted Ukraine EU candidacy status, and defied every cynic who thought our unity would not hold.

And dear friends, this is why today, we are awarding the European Parliament's most prestigious prize for freedom and human rights to the brave people of Ukraine, represented by their President, elected leaders, and civil society. Because once again, we mean it when we say that we will stand in Ukraine's corner.

And I know that we will have to continue doing more. But let today's award serve as a reminder of our unwavering support. And let it be dedicated to all those brave Ukrainian women and men on the ground. To all those we have welcomed with open hearts into our homes. And to all those who have lost their beloved family and friends. I know that the brave people of Ukraine will not give up, and let me assure you that neither will we.

Slava Ukraini!

(Loud and sustained applause)

It is now my immense honour to give the floor to the President of Ukraine, Volodymyr Zelenskyy.

Volodymyr Zelenskyy, *President of Ukraine. – (The following is a transcription of the interpretation of the original speech from Ukrainian into English)* Madam President, thank you, dear Roberta, dear friends. I greet you on behalf of all our people. It is a great honour. I greet you on behalf of those who are fighting, who are working for the sake of Ukraine and for the sake of freedom – for the sake of something without which it is impossible to imagine all of us, life, Europe. It is impossible to imagine Europe without Ukraine and without freedom – not only because it would simply be untrue, but also because any attempt to deprive Europe of Ukraine or freedom is always a crime, and we see such a crime taking place now in Russia's terrorist war against Ukraine and Europe.

This has also happened in the past, when tyrannies tried to conquer Ukrainians and deprive all Europeans of their freedom. However, when we win now – Ukrainians and all Europeans – we will win in such a way that there will never again be attempts to deprive Europe of Ukraine and freedom. We will win in such a way that there will never again be attempts to apply genocidal policies against our people, both in Ukraine and throughout Europe.

We must create – and we will create – a new and effective security architecture for global freedom and international law and order. I believe this is part of our moral duty. Look at how the Russian army is advancing: the occupiers are burning everything in front of them with artillery and missiles, bombs and drones, mines and unexploded ammunition that remain in our land. The occupiers are destroying cities and villages, and all vital infrastructure. It happened in Mariupol. You all saw it. It was the same in Volnovakha – another city left completely destroyed after the Russian offensive. More than 20 000 people lived there before this war. Now it is entirely in ruins.

The Russian Army is doing the same with Bakhmut, another city in Donbas where Russian strikes leave behind nothing but rubble. More than 70 000 people used to live there until recently, last year. Now it is in ruins. Perhaps only after the end of this war, when we liberate all of our land and are able to find all the graves of the victims of Russian terror, will we be able to say how many lives tyranny has taken this time.

We know now the names of thousands of the victims. Unfortunately, there may be many more. I ask you all to observe a minute of silence in memory of all Ukrainian men and women, all adults and children, all military and civilians, whose lives were taken by this deplorable war.

(The House rose and observed a minute's silence in memory of the victims of the war in Ukraine)

Thank you very much.

Dear friends, we must act now, without waiting for the war to end, to bring to justice all those who unleashed it and to prevent any repetition of the aggression. This will be the most effective way to protect freedom, human rights, the rule of law and other common values, which are particularly represented by this award from the European Parliament – the Sakharov Prize.

I am grateful to everyone who investigates and helps to investigate the crimes of the occupiers of Ukraine, who is looking for information about Russian murderers and terrorists. I am grateful to the International Criminal Court, which closely cooperates with Ukrainian prosecutors and has a clear intention to bring justice for the crimes committed by the occupiers on the territory of our state. I am grateful to all leaders and states, all politicians and international organisations that work together with us and make every effort to establish a tribunal for the crime of the Russian aggression against Ukraine. I call on all of you, your parties and states, to effectively support this work. The tribunal must start its work.

The European Parliament has already supported this idea. It is necessary to make it a reality as soon as possible, in particular, through the adoption of a separate European Parliament resolution in support for the establishment of the tribunal, through your support, and through the support of the relevant UN General Assembly resolution by your countries. The cities and villages destroyed by Russia, the destroyed, broken and massacred lives, should be reflected in the sentences, not only for those who directly committed all this, but also for those who organised and started this aggression.

When the principle of the inevitability of punishment is applied to the crime of aggression against Ukraine, we will be able to make the appropriate institutional basis of justice permanent. When any potential aggressor knows that punishment for a criminal war is inevitable, this will be the most effective tool for preventing war.

My final point is about historical responsibility. Evil always has a motive to return when the history of evil is not fully written.

Dear Members of the European Parliament, I know that tomorrow you will be considering the issue of recognising the Holodomor, a crime against the Ukrainian people, as genocide. I urge you to support such recognition with the maximum majority of votes in order to bring justice. Europe must give the strongest possible signal that there will be no gap in the history of tragedies on our continent, in the history of crimes against humanity committed in our land. I believe that this will happen.

Thank you for your support. Thank you for supporting our struggle and for this award. Thank you personally, Roberta. You came to Kyiv at a difficult and dangerous time. Thank you for supporting us, for supporting our reforms, for supporting our European aspirations, and for really helping. Thank you.

Glory to all our soldiers! Glory to each and every one who defends freedom and our people! Glory to Ukraine!

(The House rose and accorded President Zelenskyy a standing ovation)

(The sitting was suspended briefly.)

PRESIDENZA DELL'ON. PINA PICIERNO

Vicepresidente

7. Wiederaufnahme der Sitzung

(La seduta è ripresa alle 12.33.)

8. Abstimmungsstunde

L'ordine del giorno reca il turno di votazioni.

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

8.1. Instrument zur Unterstützung der Ukraine im Jahr 2023 (Makrofinanzhilfe+) (C9-0373/2022) (Abstimmung)

8.2. Inanspruchnahme des Solidaritätsfonds der Europäischen Union: Hilfe für Deutschland, Belgien, die Niederlande, Österreich, Luxemburg, Spanien und Griechenland (A9-0282/2022 - Henrike Hahn) (Abstimmung)

8.3. Änderung der Richtlinie über Energie aus erneuerbaren Quellen, der Richtlinie über die Gesamtenergieeffizienz von Gebäuden und der Richtlinie zur Energieeffizienz (REPowerEU) (A9-0283/2022 - Markus Pieper) (Abstimmung)

— *Dopo la votazione sulla proposta della Commissione:*

Markus Pieper (PPE). – Frau Präsidentin! Ich glaube, wir haben heute mit den schnelleren Genehmigungsverfahren für erneuerbare Energie eine sehr gute Abstimmung erreicht, und ich bitte, dass wir jetzt gemäß Artikel 59 Absatz 4 zurück in den Ausschuss gehen, um dann auch die interinstitutionellen Verhandlungen einzuleiten.

(Il Parlamento accoglie la richiesta)

8.4. Jahresbericht über die Umsetzung des Assoziierungsabkommens zwischen der EU und Georgien (A9-0274/2022 - Sven Mikser) (Abstimmung)

— *Prima della votazione sull'emendamento 27:*

Sven Mikser (S&D). – Madam President, in light of the information that has become available since the deadline for plenary amendments, namely a statement that was made by the outgoing Public Defender of Georgia on 7 December, I propose to amend the text and add the following text: 'Takes note of the statement of the Public Defender of Georgia on 7 December 2022, which calls on the President of Georgia to make use of the pardon mechanism concerning Nika Gvaramia as the case lacks justification and does not correspond to the fundamental principles of criminal law.'

(Il Parlamento accetta di porre in votazione l'emendamento orale)

8.5. Zukunftsaussichten der Zweistaatenlösung für Israel und Palästina (RC-B9-0552/2022, B9-0552/2022, B9-0553/2022, B9-0554/2022, B9-0555/2022, B9-0556/2022, B9-0557/2022) (Abstimmung)

8.6. Umsetzung der neuen europäischen Agenda für Kultur und der Strategie der EU für internationale Kulturbeziehungen (A9-0279/2022 - Salima Yenbou) (Abstimmung)

Si conclude così il turno di votazioni.

(La seduta è sospesa per qualche istante)

9. Wiederaufnahme der Sitzung

(La seduta è ripresa alle 13.10.)

10. Genehmigung des Protokolls der vorangegangenen Sitzung

Presidente. – Il processo verbale e i testi approvati della seduta di ieri sono stati distribuiti.

Vi sono osservazioni?

(L'aula non esprime osservzioni)

Il processo verbale è approvato.

Passiamo ora alle discussioni.

Onorevoli colleghi, vi chiedo però di far silenzio, perché così è veramente difficile. Chi non è interessato è pregato di uscire dall'Aula e chi è interessato è pregato di prendere posto e di fare silenzio.

11. Die Krise der Lebenshaltungskosten eindämmen: Löhne erhöhen, Gewinne besteuern, Spekulation stoppen (Aussprache über ein aktuelles Thema)

Presidente. – L'ordine del giorno reca la discussione su tematiche di attualità (articolo 162 del regolamento) – Far fronte alla crisi del costo della vita: aumentare i salari, tassare gli utili, frenare la speculazione (2022/3003(RSP))

Ricordo agli onorevoli deputati che per questo punto non è prevista la procedura «catch-the-eye», né saranno accettate domande «cartellino blu».

Mittwoch, 14. Dezember 2022

Manon Aubry, *auteure*. – Madame la Présidente, Monsieur le Commissaire, chers collègues, j'ai le plaisir aujourd'hui d'introduire, au nom de notre groupe de la gauche au Parlement européen, notre initiative pour un débat sur l'inflation et ses conséquences en Europe sur les plus précaires.

Ce choix a en effet un sens politique pour nous. Dans ce Parlement, on parle beaucoup de choses assez théoriques, mais on parle finalement assez rarement de la vie quotidienne des gens, des galères qu'ils rencontrent et de leur quotidien. C'est précisément cette réalité que nous voulons faire entrer au Parlement européen aujourd'hui.

Je ne pourrai jamais, personnellement, me résoudre à la froideur des chiffres et des agrégats économiques qu'on lit dans les journaux. D'ailleurs, nous ne devrions pas dire que l'inflation atteint 10 % en moyenne dans la zone euro, ni que les pâtes et l'huile ont augmenté de 20 %. Nous ne devrions pas dire que les salaires réels ont baissé de 2,4 % au premier semestre dans l'Union européenne. Nous devrions plutôt égrener la longue liste des enfants qui ne mangent pas à leur faim. Nous devrions décrire la détresse des étudiants ou des travailleurs précaires qui sautent des repas et peinent à se réchauffer. Le nombre de vies chamboulées, de rêves brisés, de projets non réalisés: voilà la réalité dont nous devrions parler dans ce Parlement.

Toutefois, pendant que certains galèrent, d'autres, eux, prospèrent. Il faut aussi mettre des mots sur l'autre facette de ce modèle économique défaillant. Depuis deux ans, les records des bénéfices et des dividendes versés aux actionnaires ne cessent de tomber les uns après les autres: près de 30 % d'augmentation en un an de dividendes pour les grandes entreprises européennes, et l'année qui se termine s'annonce encore plus fructueuse. Idem pour les rémunérations des grands patrons, qui repoussent sans cesse les frontières de l'indécence.

Bref, les riches s'enrichissent, les pauvres s'appauvrissent, et c'est là la conséquence directe de choix politiques. En effet, ce choc de l'inflation serait autrement moins brutal si les salaires avaient été indexés partout en Europe. Vous devriez vous en rendre compte, Monsieur Gentiloni, mais peut-être que les commissaires européens et les ministres sont bien trop à l'abri, au chaud avec leurs salaires mirobolants, pour s'apercevoir que, partout dans l'Union européenne, des gens galèrent et ne parviennent pas à finir leurs mois.

On nous assène que l'augmentation des salaires nourrirait l'inflation. C'est pourtant faux. Même le FMI, que notre groupe de la gauche n'a pas l'habitude de citer ici à cette tribune, démontre le contraire. C'est la spéculation et l'appétit des actionnaires qui font gonfler artificiellement les prix, pas les salaires des travailleurs. Et que faites-vous face à cela? Alors oui, il y a bien une microtaxe sur les superprofits, et des promesses – jamais tenues – de blocage des prix.

Vos choix ont des conséquences: tout ce que vous ne prenez pas aux plus riches ou aux multinationales, vous le prendrez aux plus pauvres, qui en paieront le prix, qui en paient même déjà le prix, avec les hausses de TVA et l'abandon des services publics. Comme si cela ne suffisait pas, la Banque centrale européenne est en roue libre: elle augmente, en parallèle, brutalement ses taux directeurs, au risque de provoquer une récession généralisée et une explosion du chômage en Europe.

Il y avait pourtant des solutions évidentes, qui ont été systématiquement balayées d'un revers de la main par vous, Monsieur Gentiloni, et par l'ensemble de la Commission européenne. De contrôle ciblé des prix il ne sera pas fait mention: ne touchons surtout pas aux tabous libéraux! Taxer plus fortement le patrimoine des plus riches pour redistribuer? Une hérésie, que d'en discuter! Toutes ces mesures seraient pourtant bien plus efficaces que n'importe quelle augmentation des taux directeurs, et bien plus durables que n'importe quelle prime ou n'importe quel chèque énergie. De la même manière, soustraire certains biens publics de l'emprise du marché, là aussi: chut! Surtout, n'en parlons pas. Au lieu de cela, la Commission et ses alliés libéraux organisent le grand retour de l'austérité. Plutôt que de taxer les riches, vous préférez purger les services publics, démanteler méthodiquement la protection sociale et attaquer les systèmes de retraite, comme Emmanuel Macron en France.

Alors, pour conclure, chers collègues, dans ce temple du consensus qu'est le Parlement européen, il est de bon ton de noyer les divergences politiques dans la culture du compromis. Néanmoins, je le dis à toutes celles et à tous ceux qui portent une responsabilité dans le désastre en cours, y compris à certains groupes politiques ici ainsi qu'à vous, Monsieur le Commissaire Gentiloni: cessez de vous cacher derrière vos poncifs libéraux éculés pour justifier votre guerre contre les plus pauvres, parce que, derrière les chiffres, des vies sont en jeu. Ne soyez pas les experts-comptables du malheur des peuples.

Mikuláš Bek, *President-in-Office of the Council*. – Madam President, Commissioner, honourable Members, thank you very much for inviting the Council to take part in today's debate on this recurring and crucial topic, which I have had the opportunity to address at a number of recent plenaries.

Russia's illegal and criminal war of aggression has come at a high human cost. We think first and foremost of the innocent victims in Ukraine and the millions of displaced Ukrainians. But Putin's war comes also with a human and economic cost for Europe. Soaring inflation and high energy prices have been a severe blow to household purchasing power and business costs.

Allow me to focus my intervention on some of the most recent developments and decisions of the Council to tackle what is clearly a main concern of EU governments.

In November, the Council adopted the guidelines for employment and social policies of Member States for the coming months and year. These guidelines react to key employment and social challenges of the last year and this year. Following that, the Commission adopted its autumn package for the Semester of Economic Governance 2023.

The cost of living crisis was one of the topics discussed last week by ministers at the Employment, Social Policy, Health and Consumer Affairs Council. The Council discussed the European Semester autumn package, where the Commission listed the main challenges caused by Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine. Historically high energy prices, high inflation rates, supply shortages, increased debt levels and rising borrowing costs are affecting business activity and eroding households' purchasing power.

All the Ministers welcomed the autumn package and the priorities set out therein, tackling the immediate difficulties that people and businesses are facing while pursuing effective labour market policies that drive the twin transition in a fair way and deliver on our climate objectives.

Given different national contexts, Member States respond differently to the situation. Some governments provide for direct support to vulnerable households or use tax reductions on certain commodities, whereas others focus on job insertion schemes or the green transition. Many Ministers stressed also the needs of upskilling and reskilling of both unemployed and employed people, including for the twin transition.

At the same EPSCO Council meeting, the Ministers adopted a political agreement on a recommendation on adequate minimum income, ensuring active inclusion. This recommendation contains several measures for further work on areas such as the adequacy of income support, access to inclusive labour markets, ensuring access to essential services, or the effectiveness and governance of social safety nets. Furthermore, Member States are recommended to ensure that all persons lacking sufficient resources are covered by a minimum income set by law.

Let me also mention other important instruments adopted at last week's EPSCO Council. They are the recommendation on long-term care and the recommendation on early childhood care and education – the Barcelona Targets for 2030, a principal instrument of the European care strategy. Both instruments promote social fairness and intergenerational solidarity while leading to the creation of jobs. They also unlock labour resources for other sectors by alleviating the family care burden.

Another measure to tackle the cost of living is the Directive on minimum wages that we adopted together earlier this year. It is worth to remind that this directive aims to help to achieve decent working conditions and a decent standard of living for employees in Europe.

I look forward to listening to your views on what can be done to alleviate the burden of the crisis on the people in Europe. Thank you very much for your attention.

Mittwoch, 14. Dezember 2022

Paolo Gentiloni, *Member of the Commission*. – Madam President, honourable Members, Minister, thank you for this timely debate, which is, of course, very, very important.

We know that, as a result of the war of aggression against Ukraine, we had further factors, elements, of crisis after the pandemic. And so families and businesses face a global surge in food prices and energy prices. And, of course, lower income households are worst hit. For the poorest households in the EU, electricity and gas absorbs a large share of their total spending, being the second spending item after food. Inflation has soared in the past year, mainly in light of rising energy and commodity prices, a tendency that has been reflected in a more general increase in prices. And businesses are also affected by rising energy costs, higher financing costs and lower consumer confidence. And this is particularly relevant for energy intensive sectors. But, all in all, we are surely facing a cost of living crisis that requires appropriate responses.

The Commission, starting with the energy, emphasised the need to address the impact of inflation on the more vulnerable citizens through targeted measures. As you know, not all measures that were taken or announced are indeed targeted to the most vulnerable but most of these measures now expire by the end of the first quarter of 2023. So I think we have now an opportunity to act in a more coordinated way.

We would therefore recommend that these support measures that are taking a large part of national budgets be first targeted to the most vulnerable, second fiscally affordable – and the two things are connected, of course – and third they preserve the price signal to maintain incentives for reducing energy consumption as set out in our proposed euro area recommendation.

We also need to acknowledge that public finances can benefit from windfall profits from certain energy companies. As you know, the Commission has proposed a price cap on market revenues for inframarginal producers and the solidarity contribution from the fossil fuel sector. This will allow Member States, together with national measures when they are taken, to channel very large profits, extraordinary profits towards who need support the most.

Addressing the cost of living crisis requires also restoring the purchasing power of wages. The attention to low-income workers is reflected in the Directive on Adequate Minimum Wages in the EU, which entered into force one month ago.

Besides providing relief to the most vulnerable, we need to secure alternative sources of supply to reduce our energy demand, accelerated with the clean energy transition, because you know that energy is now the main driver of this increase of the cost of living and of inflation.

The additional resources from REPowerEU – and I congratulate for the agreement reached tonight – will incentivise Member States to modify and amend their plan to accelerate the necessary investments and to address energy poverty. We need to be flexible in our reply to the crisis, learn from the lessons and the experience of these years, taking into account the examples of recent years' success, such as the SURE mechanism. Thank you, and I look forward to the debate.

Lídia Pereira, *em nome do Grupo PPE*. – Senhora Presidente, o aumento do custo de vida é uma realidade indesmentível. Os números históricos da inflação são evidentes, mas é fundamental olharmos para as pessoas que esses números representam.

As famílias, sobretudo as mais jovens, deparam-se com uma escalada dos preços da alimentação, uma instabilidade significativa nos preços da energia e com uma subida tremenda do crédito à habitação. Sabemos que, invariavelmente, as famílias mais pobres são as mais afetadas e as soluções não podem, por isso, fazer-se esperar.

O combate à inflação na Europa é uma prioridade política, uma urgência económica e uma emergência social. Todos têm de fazer a sua parte. Na União Europeia, o Banco Central Europeu, independente, lidera a política monetária e a Comissão tem o dever de garantir que os seus fundos, os fundos que aqui aprovamos todos os anos, chegam às pessoas e que a concorrência é livre e leal dentro do mercado interno.

Perder tempo na crítica fácil à Europa não é sério. É um expediente próprio de quem não tem soluções para apresentar no seu país. Infelizmente, é essa realidade que vemos em algumas capitais da Europa, em particular no meu país, em Portugal.

Este combate não se faz com mais impostos sobre os contribuintes, que já vivem estrangulados. Faz-se com o bom uso dos fundos europeus para gerar emprego e investimento, com orçamentos nacionais responsáveis e ambiciosos e com mais seriedade no discurso político. O tempo que vivemos não é para justificações, é, sim, para decisões.

Gabriele Bischoff, *im Namen der S&D-Fraktion.* – Frau Präsidentin! 2022 wird ein Jahr sein, das in den Geschichtsbüchern eine besondere Erwähnung finden wird, unter anderem bei der Frage, ob es ein entscheidendes Jahr für die Stabilisierung der Demokratie ist oder für die Schwächung.

Wir können sehen, dass steigende Energiepreise und die steigende Inflation einfach dazu führen, dass viele Menschen weniger Geld in ihrer Tasche haben und dass die Gespräche vor Weihnachten sich darum drehen: Wo kann man sparen, wo kann man sich einschränken? Am härtesten trifft es natürlich arme Familien, die vorher schon jeden Euro umdrehen mussten und sich fragen, ob essen oder heizen.

Wir sehen, wenn wir die Lebensmittelpreise angucken, dass sie stärker steigen, als die Energiepreise das eigentlich hergeben. Deshalb ist es offensichtlich, dass wir hier tätig werden müssen und dass wir eben nicht zulassen, dass Unternehmen sich hier bereichern und auf Kosten der Menschen tatsächlich nur ihre Profite mehren.

Deshalb ist es wichtig, wie der Kommissar gesagt hat, dass wir die Übergewinne abschöpfen müssen und dass wir viel stärker als bisher die vulnerablen Gruppen unterstützen müssen – die, die es am meisten brauchen – damit sich diese Krise nicht zu einer Krise der Demokratie ausweitet.

Das bedeutet auch, dass wir die Löhne stärken müssen. Aber zusätzlich zu steigenden Löhnen brauchen wir unterstützende Maßnahmen für diese Gruppen, weil man das allein damit gar nicht schaffen kann. Deshalb ist es wichtig: Wir brauchen eine Initiative, dass die Richtlinie über den Mindestlohn, die zwei Jahre Umsetzungszeit hat, früher umgesetzt wird, damit wir wirklich gerade denen, die es am meisten brauchen, auch mehr Geld in die Tasche geben. Tun wir's!

Billy Kelleher, *on behalf of the Renew Group.* – Madam President, with temperatures plummeting across Europe this week the cost of keeping warm is very much at the forefront of our minds. We need to take fast and meaningful action to protect the most vulnerable in our societies and make sure no one has to make the choice between heating and eating.

The EU acted decisively when imposing a tax on excessive profits of energy companies, and there should be no unnecessary profiteering from this crisis.

But I am deeply disappointed to hear that the EU ministers are now dragging their feet on imposing a cap on gas price. I would urge them to get around the table again to have a deal by the end of this year.

Taking a step back and looking at the cost of living at the moment, there is no doubt we are in a crisis. Inflation across Europe is still around 10%. In my own country it is at 8%.

But we should also be conscious that we should not go chasing inflation. Our actions need to be measured and effective. The ECB economists have already said and indicated that we are reaching or have reached the peak of inflation. We now need to prioritise and shield the most vulnerable in our societies and use any flexibility in our national EU budget to do so. And clearly what we need now, Commission and Member States, is not to go chasing the inflation, but to target the vulnerable groups, the vulnerable cohorts out there that are finding it hard to make ends meet. Certainly, we do need flexibility around national budgets to do that, but at the same time, it would be remiss of us if we just blindly started chasing inflation as it stands.

I said already, I am deeply disappointed by the Member States in the Council that they couldn't agree on a gas price cap. It is clearly evident that there is profiteering by some energy companies, but we have to break the fundamental link between gasping the price setter of electricity across Europe, and that has to happen very, very quickly, otherwise we will continue to have energy inflation feeding into the rest of the broader economy and damaging vulnerable cohorts and the standard of living of people who most need our support.

Mittwoch, 14. Dezember 2022

Claude Gruffat, *au nom du groupe Verts/ALE*. – Madame la Présidente, Monsieur Gentiloni, chers collègues, 30 %. En un an, les prix de l'alimentation ont augmenté de 30 %. Ce n'est plus de l'inflation, c'est de l'hyperinflation. Mais ces 30 % ne sont pas que le résultat de la guerre en Ukraine et des manœuvres de Poutine; ils sont aussi le fait de profiteurs de guerre et de spéculateurs qui font de l'argent sur les produits vitaux.

Voilà le résultat de ce monde hyperfinanciarisé que les politiques libérales s'évertuent à construire: des produits aussi vitaux que le pain ou les céréales sont fixés par les traders derrière leur ordinateur. Quand ces traders décident d'augmenter les prix pour payer leurs profits, ce sont nos concitoyennes et nos concitoyens qui sont obligés de les financer, sans avoir été consultés, évidemment. On revient toujours à la même chose: l'enrichissement de quelques-uns sur le dos et à la sueur du plus grand nombre.

Qu'est-ce que ce monde-là? Est-ce vraiment le sens de notre mandat ici? Est-ce vraiment pour cela que les électeurs nous ont fait confiance? C'est pourquoi je suis venu le dénoncer aujourd'hui devant vous. C'est pourquoi je veux vous appeler à l'action. Les prix ne peuvent être joués à la roulette des traders.

La crise alimentaire existait déjà avant la guerre en Ukraine. Le marché des céréales est dominé à 90 % par quatre entreprises majeures, qui ont enregistré des bénéfices de 10,3 milliards en 2021. Cette guerre a mis en lumière les très grandes limites de ce marché ultra-mondialisé tenu par des mastodontes financiers. Cela doit cesser. Une large partie de nos concitoyennes et de nos concitoyens européens avait déjà du mal à boucler les fins de mois, et maintenant ils ont tout simplement du mal à se nourrir.

Alors, face à cette situation, c'est bien simple, il n'existe qu'une seule solution: la spéculation doit être encadrée. Ce sont nos paysannes et nos paysans qui doivent nous nourrir, pas l'agrobusiness. Un encadrement qui doit être décidé par nous, maintenant.

France Jamet, *au nom du groupe ID*. – Madame la Présidente, mes chers collègues, Dieu se rit des hommes qui pleurent sur les conséquences des causes qu'ils chérissent – à moins que l'Union européenne ne tente de nous faire accroire qu'elle combat de bonne foi ce qu'elle a édifié avec tellement de persévérance.

En effet, qui a favorisé le modèle économique qui a permis ces dérives? Qui a donné tout pouvoir à la spéculation, en faisant toujours plus pour les banques et la haute finance face à l'économie réelle? Qui a fait pression à la baisse sur les salaires, en instituant un dumping social avec le travail détaché, l'immigration incontrôlée et l'escroquerie du libre-échange? Qui a laissé prospérer un système d'évasion fiscale et corruptif au sein même de l'Union européenne?

Le pire reste à venir: avec le sacrifice de notre filière nucléaire et cette Union européenne qui sanctionne, tandis que les États-Unis subventionnent, c'est l'évasion et la fuite de nos emplois et de nos entreprises. C'est un protectionnisme intelligent dont nous avons besoin, mais vous le refusez. Ce sont des coopérations entre États qui le souhaitent sur des sujets pertinents et le fruit d'une volonté politique commune dont nous avons besoin, mais vous le refusez. Ne cherchez pas ailleurs la solution. Le problème, c'est vous.

Nicola Procaccini, *a nome del gruppo ECR*. – Signora Presidente, onorevoli colleghi, per far fronte alla crisi del costo della vita provocata dall'aumento del costo dell'energia, c'è una soluzione facile facile: fare il contrario di quanto stiamo facendo fino ad ora.

Innanzitutto bisogna fermare la speculazione sul prezzo del gas, da cui dipende il costo dell'energia elettrica in generale per famiglie e imprese. Purtroppo, nonostante la maggioranza degli Stati europei si sia espressa, già diversi mesi fa, sulla necessità di stabilire un tetto al prezzo del gas, ci sono pochi governi, ma evidentemente molto influenti, che stanno impedendo l'adozione di una misura così importante.

Questi governi costringono sé stessi e tutti gli altri dell'Unione europea, a bruciare miliardi di euro prelevandoli dai propri bilanci nazionali. Una scelta assurda, inspiegabile, che sta regalando enormi profitti agli speculatori che agiscono indisturbati sul mercato TTF di Amsterdam e, nello stesso tempo, questo blocco costituito da Germania, Olanda e Ungheria garantisce a Putin di aumentare le proprie entrate dalla vendita di gas all'Unione europea, in modo da poter finanziare i propri armamenti pur producendo meno gas.

Un'ora fa abbiamo onorato la resistenza del popolo ucraino. Ditemi che coerenza ci può essere in tutto questo, perché io proprio non lo capisco.

Sira Rego, *en nombre del Grupo The Left*. – Señora presidenta, el problema del aumento del coste de la vida se debe fundamentalmente a un hecho contrastado: las multinacionales, la banca y el sector financiero son unos parásitos. Me explico.

Las seis mayores empresas de España —por supuesto, energía y banca— tuvieron beneficios históricos este año: 25 000 millones de euros. Han crecido siete veces más que los salarios. Esto significa que han aprovechado la crisis para especular y hacer caja de forma oportunista, saqueando los bolsillos de las familias. Por si fuera poco, los incompetentes que dirigen el Banco Central Europeo suben los tipos de interés, asfixiando con las hipotecas, aumentando los beneficios de la banca y empujándonos a la recesión. Pero esto no es inevitable.

Mire, señor Gentiloni, le doy alguna sugerencia: hagan el favor de exigir al Banco Central Europeo que baje inmediatamente los tipos de interés; impulsen de una vez la reforma del mercado marginalista —es la única forma de contener el precio de la energía—; y, sobre todo, por favor, trabajen la empatía. Hay mucha gente en Europa sufriendo por sus malas decisiones.

Luděk Niedermayer (PPE). – Madam President, dear colleagues, dear guests, let me contribute to this debate by adding some economic points that I consider important.

So, first and foremost, high inflation is evil. It increases the cost. It reduces the value of savings. We should support ECB and national central banks in getting inflation under control. Fiscal policy should not undermine this support.

Second, fiscal policy should be targeted to the most vulnerable and firms most affected. In order to deliver this result, it should not undermine the disinflationary policy. Data showing that only a small fraction of the support is targeted are not good.

On energies, two factors should be carefully considered. First of all, subsidies to energy prices should not undermine our main goal; our main goal is to provide security of supply to our households and the firms. If we reduce price too much, there is a risk that we will run out of the gas.

The second, we should not undermine fair competition on the single market. The single market is the most precious economic asset of the European Union, and we must make sure that it functions properly.

I believe we can manage this bad crisis caused by Vladimir Putin. It should not lead to a deep recession. It should not hit the most vulnerable badly. To reach this result, the policies must be implemented in a smart and targeted way, and should not undermine each other and also should not undermine significant risks that we are avoiding.

Jonás Fernández (S&D). – Señora presidenta, señor comisario, ciertamente estamos atravesando momentos complicados. Los efectos económicos y sociales en el conjunto del continente europeo de la guerra de Putin en Ucrania están presentes. Y están presentes también en las dificultades para llegar a fin de mes y en las dificultades para pagar los costes energéticos o los costes alimentarios de nuestros ciudadanos.

Y yo creo que la Comisión ha trabajado bien. Celebramos el acuerdo sobre el plan REPowerEU y celebramos las contribuciones sociales sobre el sector energético, pero también vemos a los Estados miembros respondiendo con distintas medidas, con poco orden, con poca organización, con casi cada uno buscando soluciones particulares. En algunos casos recuerda a los primeros meses del impacto de la pandemia, cuando los Gobiernos intentaban resolver pero faltaba una respuesta comunitaria.

Es importante que la revisión de las ayudas de Estado esté bien controlada por parte de la Comisión. Corremos el riesgo de poner en juego el mercado único y necesitamos un instrumento, como el SURE, para armonizar las políticas frente a esta crisis energética en la Unión Europea y acelerar, por cierto, la reforma del mercado eléctrico.

Ivars Ijabs (Renew). – Godātā prezidentes kundze, *Gentiloni* kungs! No visiem risinājumiem dzīves dārdzības krīzē es vēlētos uzsvērt galveno principu, proti, mērķētu atbalstu neaizsargātajiem. Bet tas prasa veidot mūsu atbalsta sistēmas tā, lai būtu iespējams skaidri ieraudzīt un ātri sasniegt šos cilvēkus bez liekas birokrātijas un kavēšanās. Tās ir tās visievainojamākās iedzīvotāju grupas kā vientuļie sirmgalvji, ģimenes ar vairākiem bērniem, cilvēki ar īpašām vajadzībām.

Es esmu pārliecināts, ka tieši mērķēta palīdzība trūcīgākajiem izmaksu ziņā ir labāks risinājums nekā nodokļu samazinājumi vai arī tādas visaptverošas subsīdijas enerģijas, īpaši fosilās enerģijas, cenā. Tātad labākie atbalsta instrumenti visiem eiropiešiem ir tie, kuri veicina ilgtspēju un mazina enerģijas patēriņu, piemēram, lētas biļetes sabiedriskajā transportā, atbalsts ģimenēm, pāreja uz zaļāku enerģiju, jau šobrīd un ar Eiropas fondu atbalstu.

Un, runājot par dzīves dārdzību, ir vērts atcerēties, cik dārga Eiropā šobrīd vispār ir dzīvība. Es runāju, pirmkārt, par ģimenēm Ukrainas pilsētās un ciemos, kurām noziedzīgais Putina režīms ar savām raķetēm mērķtiecīgi atņem siltumu, elektrību, ūdeni un pamatvajadzības. Bez uzvaras pār Putinu nebūs uzvaras pār šo dzīves dārdzības krīzi!

Sara Matthieu (Verts/ALE). – Voorzitter, de temperaturen dalen stevig. Tegelijkertijd blijven de prijzen voor energie extreem hoog. Dit is precies waar we begin dit jaar al voor hebben gewaarschuwd: mensen moeten kiezen tussen eten of hun woning verwarmen.

Nochtans zijn die op hol geslagen levenskosten niet zomaar een onoverkomelijk feit. We kennen de oplossingen om die prijzen onder controle te houden, maar ze laten veel te lang op zich wachten. We hebben nog altijd geen Europees prijsplafond op gas, en ondertussen blijft de speculatie doorgaan. We hebben een Europese wet voor hogere minimumlonen. Alleen blijven de lidstaten talmen om deze onmiddellijk toe te passen. We hebben nog altijd geen afdwingbaar leefloon boven de armoedegrens. Nochtans kan Europa dit betalen.

Ik begrijp dat mensen gefrustreerd en radeloos zijn. Ik denk dat we nu snel een aantal maatregelen moeten doorvoeren: een basisrecht op energie, een verbod op uithuiszettingen, een verbod op het afkoppelen van energie – zelfs als je de factuur niet kan betalen. Als we er nu geen werk van maken, dan duwen we mensen nog verder de armoede in.

Gunnar Beck (ID). – Frau Präsidentin, Herr Kommissar! Die EU ist in der Stagflation: null Wachstum bei EU-weit rund 10 % Inflation und in einigen Regionen über 20 % Inflation. Deshalb sollen die Löhne erhöht, Profite stärker besteuert und Spekulation – so sagen Sie – beendet werden. Allerdings: Spekulation können Sie gar nicht beenden! Höhere Löhne brauchen wir gewiss, aber sie beflügeln bekanntermaßen auch die Inflation, und Profite sollten höchstens mehr besteuert werden, wenn Preise stärker als die Kosten steigen.

Die EU gibt vor, der Ukrainekrieg sei schuld an allem. Tatsächlich sind es Ihre Klimapolitik und die sogenannte Geldpolitik der EZB. Denn die Preise stiegen schon vor Kriegsausbruch stark an. Dass nun kaum mehr russisches Gas fließt, ist nicht Schuld Russlands, sondern die Schuld Ihrer Sanktionen und der Sabotageakte gegen die Nord-Stream-Pipelines, die Sie nicht untersuchen wollen, sondern verschleiern. Und die höchsten Strompreise der Welt hatte Deutschland bereits vor einem Jahr. Ferner erhöhte die EZB unter Draghi und Lagarde die Geldmenge um mindestens 70 %. Jeder Vorschüler weiß, dass die Preise steigen, wenn die Zentralbank zu viel Geld schafft.

Deshalb: Beenden Sie ihre sinnlose Klimapolitik, deren Einfluss auf das Weltklima bei einem EU-Anteil von 8 % an den weltweiten Emissionen null ist. Bändigen Sie die EZB, die die Eurozone nur noch durch Inflation zu retten weiß, und beenden Sie die Wirtschaftssanktionen gegen Russland, die uns mehr schaden als Wladimir Putin. Anders gesagt: Machen Sie alles anders als seit zehn Jahren, und machen Sie nichts so wie bislang!

Jorge Buxadé Villalba (ECR). – Señora presidente, el aumento de precios no es cosa de ahora. Los españoles llevan sufriendo un incremento de precios de forma dramática desde la desastrosa gestión de la pandemia. La gasolina, la calefacción, la cesta de la compra, los productos básicos… todo ha subido, mientras los salarios de los españoles —y del resto de europeos— se mantienen intactos, cuando no van para abajo. Ya era hora de que este Parlamento le dedicara un minuto a debatir este asunto y dejara de hablar de sus profecías climáticas, de las extremas derechas, del peligro de Polonia o Hungría, o de los setenta y dos géneros.

En VOX llevamos denunciándolo desde que estamos aquí, desde que decidieron cerrar negocios mientras rendían honores a Greta Thunberg. ¿Quieren bajar el coste de la vida? Bajen los impuestos. ¿Quieren acabar con la inflación? Dejen de imprimir dinero como locos. ¿Quieren abaratar el precio de la energía y de los alimentos? Renuncien al fanatismo climático. ¿Quieren que suban los salarios? Dejen de importar mano de obra barata con el tráfico de inmigrantes ilegales e invirtamos en nuestra industria. ¿Quieren mejorar la vida de la gente? Digan adiós a la Agenda 2030.

Señor comisario, señora presidente, todos: feliz Navidad y gloria a Dios en el pesebre.

Kateřina Konečná (The Left). – Paní předsedající, od Evropské komise neustále za poslední rok slýcháme, jak se musíme uskromňovat, abychom si pak v tisku přečetli, o kolik zase nejbohatší zbohatli – krize nekrize. A vaše řešení? Přenést ekonomickou zátěž na občany, kterým letos poklesne v mnoha případech zásadně životní úroveň. V České republice klesnou reálné mzdy nejvíc za posledních třicet let a také nejvíce ze zemí OECD. Přitom zdroje k tomu, aby krize opět nedopadla na ty nejzranitelnější, přece jsou. Trpíme tady odliv kapitálu do zahraničí i v rámci samotné Evropské unie, díváme se na daňové ráje a nadnárodní giganty si z nás dělají prostě dobrý den, protože je nikdo nereguluje.

Kdy už konečně seberete odvahu a postavíte se za ty, pro které byste tady měli být, pane komisaři? A kdy EU přestane problémy vytvářet a začne je řešit? Dost bylo slov. Posloucháme to tady téměř rok a nic se neděje. Lidem se žije hůř a hůř. Chce to něco konkrétního, co pro ně konkrétně uděláte.

Maria Angela Danzì (NI). – Signora Presidente, signor Commissario, onorevoli colleghi, l'inflazione in ottobre ha segnato un più 10 %, ma gli stipendi e le pensioni sono rimasti pressoché fermi. Nei prossimi mesi aumenteranno povertà ed esclusione sociale. Rischiamo un disastro. Le imprese europee pagano oggi il costo dell'energia sette volte di più delle concorrenti americane e asiatiche.

Chiedo a tutti voi: fino a quando potranno resistere sul mercato globale? Davanti a una crisi strutturale, la risposta europea è carente o addirittura dannosa, dato che l'aumento del costo del denaro da parte della BCE non ha abbassato l'inflazione, ma aumenta il rischio di recessione e di dipendenza energetica.

Per combattere l'aumento dei prezzi bisogna fermare la speculazione. Non è tollerabile che imprese pubbliche maturino più profitti, specie nel settore delle reti termiche e, a tal proposito, segnalo una mia interrogazione alla Commissione.

Per il Movimento 5 Stelle bisogna porre un tetto al prezzo del gas, bisogna effettuare acquisti unici europei e mettere un divieto alle imprese in controllo pubblico di produrre utili sui servizi di interesse generale, nonché un *recovery fund* energetico, che rilanci gli investimenti nel settore delle energie rinnovabili.

Isabel Benjumea Benjumea (PPE). – Señora presidenta, señor comisario, señor ministro, claro que es una prioridad. Y debe ser nuestra prioridad hacer frente a la escalada de precios que afecta de una manera tremendamente cruel a muchísimos hogares europeos, pero también a empresarios, a autónomos, a emprendedores y a pymes europeas que están haciendo unos verdaderos esfuerzos, inmensos, para salir adelante, para seguir creando puestos de trabajo, para seguir creando riqueza.

No me canso de decir que la Unión Europea ha puesto en marcha un mecanismo espectacular, que es el mecanismo de los fondos Next Generation EU, que precisamente de lo que habla es de inversiones y de reformas.

La pregunta que yo le hago a la Comisión es si está la Comisión ejerciendo su labor, su responsabilidad de vigilar que se están acometiendo las reformas necesarias, que estas reformas están teniendo el impacto que se buscaba y si, además, se están ejecutando los fondos con la agilidad y la rapidez que se necesita en este momento. Estamos pendientes de grandes inversiones. Por ejemplo, en mi país, en España, llevamos un retraso inmenso.

Tenemos un gran instrumento que son los fondos Next Generation EU y yo apelo a la Comisión a que, con esa responsabilidad, se preocupe de garantizar que se ejecutan rápido los fondos y se acometen las reformas necesarias.

Agnes Jongerius (S&D). – Voorzitter, mensen krijgen de kosten voor hun kiezen voor duurdere boodschappen, voor de hogere energierekening en voor een flink hogere huur. Zo spreken we dus van een echte koopkrachtcrisis. Niet alleen blijven de lonen al jarenlang achter bij de stijgende productiviteit, ook de inflatie wordt al jarenlang niet bijgehouden. Dat moet dus echt anders.

Het minimumloon moet sneller omhoog. Ik wil van de Commissie een oproep aan de Raad en de lidstaten om de richtlijn betreffende minimumlonen snel in te voeren. Ons Nederlands kabinet heeft liever een kluwen aan toeslagen en bijslagen waar mensen zich doorheen moeten worstelen, dan een minimumloon op een echt toereikend niveau. Maar je zou niet afhankelijk moeten zijn van toeslagen wanneer je werkt.

Nu ik hier toch sta, grijp ik dit moment ook aan om de volgende oproep te lanceren. Het is tijd om terug te duwen. Sluit je aan bij een vakbond. Het loont om samen in actie te komen.

Engin Eroglu (Renew). – Frau Präsidentin, sehr geehrter Herr Gentiloni, sehr geehrter Herr Bek! Seit Monaten sehen wir die Preissteigerung, das ist klar. Aber es ist ja wichtig, jeden Monat darauf zu schauen, wie die Preissteigerung sich verändert.

Nun ist speziell in diesem Monat November ganz klar zu sehen, dass die Inflation in den Mitgliedstaaten, die den Euro haben, durch die hohen Lebensmittelpreise sehr hoch gehalten wird. Das heißt, wir müssen diesen Monat vor allem die Lebensmittelpreise in den Fokus der Diskussion nehmen und uns sozusagen in der Diskussion auch verändern und nicht ewig an alten Themen festhalten.

Herr Gentiloni, mir ist dabei aufgefallen – ich habe mir die Sache mal angeschaut –, dass die Kommission selber sagt, dass 10 % der Lebensmittel in der Europäischen Union weggeworfen werden. Das heißt, wir müssen jetzt nicht ewig diskutieren, was wir ständig erhöhen und verändern können, sondern wir müssen doch ganz klar jetzt vorhandene Strukturen verändern und zusehen, dass wir nicht mehr 10 % dieser Lebensmittel wegwerfen.

Das wäre eine Diskussion zum Beispiel darüber, dass beim Mindesthaltbarkeitsdatum von Lebensmitteln die Haftung verändert wird. In Deutschland ist es zum Beispiel so, dass bis zum Haltbarkeitsdatum der Hersteller haftet und ab dem Ablauf der Verkäufer. Hier müssen wir eine Diskussion der Fachpolitiker hinbekommen und gegebenenfalls die Haftung verändern, damit die Lebensmittel nicht mehr von den Unternehmen weggeworfen werden.

Henrike Hahn (Verts/ALE). – Frau Präsidentin! Hohe Energiepreise, hohe Lebensmittelpreise, Rekordinflation – das ist schwer für die Menschen und die Unternehmen in Europa.

Die EU-Mitgliedstaaten tun viel dafür, um diese Auswirkungen der Inflation abzumildern. Auch das Programm REPowerEU, die Anpassung an die Erneuerbare-Energien-Richtlinie und das Energieeffizienzgesetz, beschleunigt jetzt die grüne Transformation, bringt die Energiepreise hinunter und arbeitet damit gegen die Inflation.

Wir müssen auch etwas gegen die Marktmanipulation auf den Energiemärkten tun und die Aufsicht der nationalen Behörden und die europäische Aufsichtsbehörde ESMA stärken. Energielieferanten unterstehen nicht der gleichen Finanzaufsicht wie traditionelle Banken, und es ist eine gute Sache, dass die EZB jetzt beschlossen hat zu prüfen, ob der weitgehend unregulierte Finanzhandel von Energieunternehmen ein Risiko für das Finanzsystem darstellen kann.

Wir müssen jetzt mit aller Kraft gegen die hohen Energiepreise kämpfen und gegen die Inflation, die jetzt in Europa das Leben so vieler Menschen schwer macht.

Isabella Tovaglieri (ID). – Signora Presidente, signor Commissario, onorevoli colleghi, la speculazione sui prezzi dell'energia sta letteralmente mettendo in ginocchio cittadini e imprese, ma purtroppo l'Europa non sembra rendersene conto.

Oggi abbiamo insignito qui, al Parlamento europeo, il popolo ucraino del più alto riconoscimento europeo, appunto il Premio Sacharov, ma non ci rendiamo conto che se l'Europa non intraprenderà a breve azioni concrete ed immediate a favore dei cittadini europei, questo significherà rendere molto presto impopolare il sostegno che l'Europa sta accordando all'Ucraina.

Non possiamo, infatti, continuamente chiedere sacrifici ai nostri cittadini, già piegati da due anni di pandemia, senza offrire loro delle soluzioni concrete per il contenimento della bolla speculativa e, soprattutto, prospettive di uscita dalla crisi energetica.

A quasi un anno dall'inizio del conflitto, infatti, è giunto il momento che l'Europa si attivi per evitare vergognose speculazioni sulla guerra e, al tempo stesso, riveda però tutte quelle posizioni ideologiche che sono incompatibili con lo scenario economico che ci troviamo di fronte.

L'inflazione generata dalle scelte *green* fuori dalla realtà, volute fortemente dalle sinistre europee, sta affossando la già difficile ripresa economica post-pandemica, colpendo soprattutto le fasce più deboli della popolazione e le piccole e medie imprese.

Oggi che la credibilità di questo Parlamento è fortemente minata dai gravi scandali politico-giudiziari, l'unico modo per recuperare la fiducia dell'opinione pubblica è dare risposte concrete ai drammatici problemi con cui i cittadini si confrontano ogni giorno, anche se questo può significare mettere da parte l'ideologia o rinunciare a difendere qualche lobby.

Senza iniziative coraggiose ed efficaci il futuro di questa istituzione rimane appesa a un filo.

Jadwiga Wiśniewska (ECR). – Pani Przewodnicząca! Panie Komisarzu! Szanowni Państwo! Związane z inflacją rosnące koszty utrzymania to dzisiaj największy problem społeczny w Europie. Zwiększenie się obszarów biedy jest zjawiskiem, którego dawno nie oglądaliśmy w Europie. Pojawiło się pod koniec kryzysu Covid-19, a wzrosło znacząco w czasie rosyjskiej inwazji na Ukrainę. De facto europejska gospodarka stoi w obliczu recesji, co z całą pewnością doprowadzi do jeszcze większego wzrostu bezrobocia, do zwiększających się obszarów biedy. Przyczyną gwałtownego wzrostu inflacji są nie tylko konsekwencje rosyjskiej agresji na Ukrainę, ale i konsekwencje wdrażania nierozważnej, nieroztropnej polityki klimatycznej, odchodzenia od paliw kopalnych, a także konsekwencje fałszywej transformacji prowadzącej do uzależnienia Unii Europejskiej od Rosji.

Chciałabym zwrócić uwagę na temat naszej dyskusji – zatrzymać spekulację. Zatem chciałam zapytać Pana Komisarza, dlaczego do tej pory nie wykluczono innych instytucji finansowych z rynku handlu uprawnieniami do emisji. Przypomnę w 2017 r. tona uprawnień do emisji CO_2 kosztowała pięć euro, w lutym 2022 r. – 100 euro. Proszę Państwa, lewa strona jest taka wrażliwa na tę biedę. Rzekomo jesteście wrażliwi, bo popieracie tą horrendalną, idiotyczną politykę klimatyczną, która prowadzi do wzrostu ubóstwa energetycznego. Czas zredefiniować politykę klimatyczną. Czy w obliczu rosnącej biedy Komisja Europejska odpowie tym ludziom, którzy nie mają na ogrzewanie, na opłatę rachunków, na zakupy niezbędne do życia, że musimy realizować ideę zielonego ładu? Tym ludzie mają napełnić swoje żołądki, tym mają się ogrzać? Czas się zastanowić i zreflektować. I podjąć działania realne, rozważne i niezbędne do tego, by zwalczać ubóstwo.

José Gusmão (The Left). – Senhora Presidente, depois de uma resposta à crise pandémica, que parecia indiciar que a Europa tinha aprendido a lição da crise financeira, voltamos a caminhar para uma recessão e uma crise económica autoimpostas.

O Banco Central Europeu, contra as suas próprias análises, responde à inflação com o aumento das taxas de juro. A Comissão lamenta as consequências da especulação na finança, na distribuição e na energia, mas nada faz para travar essa especulação, e governos como o meu congelam salários e pensões, impondo um corte definitivo a todas as pessoas que viveram ou vivem do seu trabalho, ao mesmo tempo que oferece benesses fiscais aos rendimentos do capital.

A recessão económica em 2023 não é inevitável. Sabemos quais são as soluções que funcionaram e sabemos também quais foram as soluções que falharam no passado. É preciso inverter o rumo da política orçamental e da política monetária na União Europeia, caso contrário teremos que responder perante os nossos cidadãos por termos provocado, consciente e deliberadamente, uma nova crise económica no espaço europeu.

Κώστας Παπαδάκης (NI). – Κυρία Πρόεδρε, η Ευρωπαϊκή Ένωση και οι κυβερνήσεις πασχίζουν να συγκαλύψουν τις αιτίες της καλπάζουσας ακρίβειας που βασανίζει τον λαό, όμως αυτές δεν κρύβονται: μισθοί και συντάξεις πείνας με αυξήσεις που αποτελούν μειώσεις· ο εκτιναγμένος πληθωρισμός από τα ταμεία ανάκαμψης και την επεκτατική πολιτική της πράσινης και ψηφιακής στρατηγικής της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης και των κυβερνήσεων, με άφθονο χρήμα για το κεφάλαιο, που ακριβοπληρώνει ο λαός με «πράσινα χαράτσια» στην ενέργεια, στα καύσιμα, τα τρόφιμα, τα ενοίκια· ο κλιμακούμενος πόλεμος ΝΑΤΟ-Ρωσίας και οι αλλεπάλληλες κυρώσεις που τον συνοδεύουν· όλα αυτά, μεταξύ άλλων, σημαδεύουν τον πραγματικό ένοχο, το εκμεταλλευτικό σύστημα. Δεν πρόκειται λοιπόν για αισχροκέρδεια όπως ισχυρίζονται, αλλά για τις ίδιες τις νομοτέλειες της καπιταλιστικής αγοράς. Απέναντι στην κοροϊδία των καλαθιών εξαθλίωσης, της «ψιχουλομαχίας» ανάμεσα σε φιλελεύθερους και σοσιαλδημοκράτες, πρέπει να δυναμώσει τώρα η οργάνωση της λαϊκής πάλης για πραγματικές αυξήσεις σε μισθούς και συντάξεις, κατάργηση

έμμεσων φόρων σε καύσιμα, ενέργεια και τρόφιμα, χειραφέτηση του λαού σε ρήξη με τις δεσμεύσεις της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης και τη διαχρονική στρατηγική των κυβερνήσεων που υπηρετούν το κεφάλαιο.

Herbert Dorfmann (PPE). – Frau Präsidentin, Herr Kommissar, liebe Kolleginnen und Kollegen! Die Inflation, die wir derzeit erleben, hat im Grunde zwei Ursachen: Energie und leider auch Lebensmittel. Und die zwei hängen ganz eng zusammen.

11 % der Kosten in der Landwirtschaft sind im Schnitt Energiekosten. Dazu kommen derzeit hohe Düngerpreise, die auch teilweise Folge der hohen Energiepreise sind. Die Folge ist, dass viele Menschen leider versuchen, billige Lebensmittel zu finden, und der Premiumsektor – qualitativ hochwertige und nachhaltig produzierte Lebensmittel – und auch die Biolandwirtschaft leiden unter dieser Situation.

Das ist genau das, was wir nicht wollen. Deswegen müssen wir wieder vermehrt darauf schauen, dass nicht Spekulanten solche Zeiten ausnützen. Es kann einfach nicht sein, dass viele unserer Bürger bei der Ernährung sparen müssen, während sich Energiekonzerne, Lebensmittelhändler und Düngerproduzenten die Bilanzen aufbessern.

Die Menschen wissen nicht, wie sie ihre Rechnungen bezahlen sollen, und wir reden hier über Besteuerung von Sonderprofiten. Irgendwas läuft da nicht ganz richtig. Deshalb brauchen wir im Grunde drei Dinge: Wir brauchen eine klare Preisobergrenze bei der Energie, wir brauchen wieder einen funktionierenden Düngermarkt, und wir brauchen auch keine neuen Gesetzesinitiativen, welche Lebensmittelsicherheit und Versorgung in Europa gefährden.

Paul Tang (S&D). – Madam President, it is collective action that is essential to face the challenges of our time. Together, we stand. Divided, we fall.

The war in the Ukraine, extremely high energy prices, the impact of the pandemic, the consequences of climate change – what we needed and what we need is collective action to protect people and small businesses from the disruptive effects of these challenges on normal life.

What we need is a strong government. What we don't need is austerity. Europeans have lived through austerity before and they say not again. But be realistic: a strong government needs solid funding. And this holds especially true in times of inflation. Budgetary deficits only contribute to inflation.

The IMF, the ECB and a bunch of other economists all say it's taxation, stupid. Indeed, we need to break with the taboo of taxation. No, do not raise taxes on labour. But yes, do raise taxes on profits, wealth and pollution. Level the playing field between capital and labour, between workers and investors. Wealth in Europe is wildly undertaxed. However, it's better to let money work than to work yourself.

Colleagues, let's their four stand together, allow for a strong government, break with the taboo on taxation. The need in our era of high energy prices is compensation for the many, taxation for the few.

Valter Flego (Renew). – Poštovana predsjedavajuća, poštovane kolegice i kolege, na kraju smo jedne teške godine, teške 2022. godine.

U ovo isto vrijeme, naime, pred godinu dana s optimizmom smo gledali na ovu 2022. godinu i planirali ju i nadali se potpunom oporavku nakon korona pandemije i boljim danima. Nažalost, te su se nade ugasile 24.2. kada je krenuo ovaj nesretni rat u Ukrajini i kad je krenulo divljanje cijena energije i inflacije posljedično. Pokazalo se, naime, da Europa nije bila spremna za tako brutalni energetski rat. Nažalost, i uz sve mjere Europske unije najveću cijenu plaćaju naši građani i gospodarstvo kojima nije nimalo lako.

Zato, poštovani povjereniče Gentiloni, smatram da u sljedećoj godini prioritet rada Komisije treba biti zaustavljanje inflacije, jačanje obnovljivih izvora energije i pojednostavljivanje papirologije za građane i gospodarstvo te daljnja pomoć i subvencije Komisije i država članica najugroženijim skupinama. Mnoge, naime, investicije mogu pričekati, ali ovo o čemu pričam nikako ne, ako želimo jednu bolju, sretniju i ugodniju 2023. godinu.

Ana Miranda (Verts/ALE). – Senhora Presidente, os aumentos consecutivos dos preços no consumidor, nomeadamente em produtos como os combustíveis e os produtos alimentares, estão a contribuir para o aumento da taxa da inflação. Sabe o Comissário, quanto custam os ovos, batatas, o leite, o peixe, a carne e a luz?

Os bens de primeira necessidade são um luxo para muitas famílias, para famílias grandes, para famílias monoparentais, para estudantes, para pessoas com baixos rendimentos. Vivemos uma emergência social. Os trabalhadores e as trabalhadoras ganham menos e vivem pior, os salários não aumentam. Os trabalhadores por conta própria e os produtores? Sobrecarregados. Os agregados vulneráveis? Sobrecarregados. E a Comissão quer voltar à austeridade.

No meu país, a Galiza, a pobreza aumentou. A crise dos preços está a ter um impacto sem precedentes nas classes mais baixas, agravada pela dependência dos setores produtivos, pesqueiros e agrícolas e agravada pela falta de apoio dos governos. Trata-se novamente de uma grande fraude contra as populações. Os ricos cada vez mais ricos e as multinacionais cada vez com mais lucros. Isto tem que acabar, porque muita gente fica pelo caminho.

Agora a Comissão deveria baixar os tipos de interesse. Precisamos de mudanças estruturais na economia. Quem tem mais, que pague mais. No domingo, nas ruas de Santiago de Compostela, a manifestação pela crise dos preços dirá novamente que precisamos de alternativas.

Jean-Lin Lacapelle (ID). – Madame la Présidente, chers collègues, face à la crise, établissons en premier lieu les responsabilités. Dans l'immédiat, il s'agit de la guerre en Ukraine et aussi des sanctions écervelées sur l'énergie, dont tout le monde savait quel désastre économique elles allaient provoquer. Plus anciennement, il s'agissait du néolibéralisme, du libre-échangisme, du mondialisme et de son cortège de délocalisations et d'inflation financière. Mais tout cela, chers collègues, c'était la politique de l'Union européenne bien avant 2022.

À présent, la première solution est, au contraire de ce que fait Ursula von der Leyen, de ne plus entretenir le dramatique conflit en Ukraine. Plus vite la paix sera trouvée, mieux cela sera. Il est également urgent de corriger un régime de sanctions absurdes, qui ne nuit qu'à l'Europe et aux Européens.

Parlons ensuite des salaires. Par l'immigration de masse, à l'image du projet de loi de régularisation massive qui se dessine en France, les gouvernements européens entretiennent délibérément une pression à la baisse sur les salaires. Il faut y mettre fin. Depuis longtemps, le Rassemblement national propose une revalorisation du salaire réel de 10 %, en contrepartie d'une exonération de charges. Il propose également d'aider les ménages dans le besoin, en abaissant la TVA à 5,5 % sur les énergies et en la supprimant sur cent produits de première nécessité.

S'il faut, enfin, faire cesser la spéculation, alors oui, attaquons-nous aux spéculateurs qui jouent sur les cours des matières premières, mais aussi à ceux qui, tel George Soros, deviennent multimilliardaires en spéculant sur le cours des monnaies, entraînant les pays dans l'austérité et les peuples dans la pauvreté. Il est vrai que Soros et ses réseaux infestent les institutions européennes, dont l'actualité nous montre que la corruption y sévit. Alors, augmentons les salaires, mais arrêtons aussi l'immigration de masse et traquons les profiteurs de crise!

Michiel Hoogeveen (ECR). – Voorzitter, de kosten voor het dagelijks levensonderhoud rijzen de pan uit. Inflatie heeft zich breed verankerd in de economie. Nu worden hier hogere lonen en uitkeringen geëist. Om dat te betalen, staan velen hier te roepen: "Laten we de kleine man redden door bedrijven te belasten!"

Jullie zijn er nog steeds niet achter dat belasting op het bedrijfsleven uiteindelijk wordt betaald door de klant, aan de kassa – een soort verborgen omzetbelasting. Extra overheidssteun, zoals een prijsplafond, is ook een heilloze oplossing. Daarmee wakker je slechts de vraag aan, waardoor de prijzen hoog blijven. Laat de energiemarkt gewoon zijn werk doen en investeer eindelijk in extra aanbod van betrouwbare én betaalbare energie.

Waar de EU en de lidstaten wél kunnen helpen? Snij in het eigen vlees. Kies voor een kleinere overheid, een kleinere EU. Want méér EU is niet de oplossing voor onze problemen, maar juist de oorzaak van onze problemen.

Eugenia Rodríguez Palop (The Left). – Señora presidenta, señor comisario, el coste de la vida sube y los gobiernos tienen que actuar, que para eso están. En España ya lo estamos haciendo. El tope a la subida de los alquileres, el apoyo a los hipotecados más vulnerables, la subida de las pensiones, la solución ibérica al tope del gas, la gratuidad en el transporte ferroviario y el descuento de los carburantes son medidas que ya alivian la situación de hogares, trabajadores y pequeñas empresas.

Todo esto se acompaña de medidas fiscales, como los gravámenes a la banca y a las eléctricas y la presión a los grandes patrimonios para que contribuyan o a quienes obtienen enormes beneficios con cada crisis. Se trabaja, además, para contener el precio de la cesta de la compra y, a pesar de la oposición empresarial, se baraja una subida del salario mínimo que pueda igualar a la del IPC.

Son medidas que están sirviendo de ejemplo en Europa y que deberían seguir quienes hoy se oponen a poner un tope al gas. Lo que está claro es que subir los tipos de interés no es la solución.

Seán Kelly (PPE). – *A Uachtaráin*, Putin's unjustified invasion of Ukraine continues and, consequently, Europe is grappling with the unprecedented increase in the cost of living. Households across all Member States are struggling to stay warm this winter and to pay their bills.

We are at a crisis point and the reality is that without immediate action, the situation will continue to worsen. The EU must ensure that concrete measures and supports are put in place to protect businesses and households from inflation. We cannot allow Putin to weaponise our energy supply.

It is imperative that we are pragmatic in our approach to tackling the crisis. I previously expressed my support for the introduction of windfall policies, but we should keep emergency interventions such as price caps separate from the overall market design. We can provide investor certainty and protect consumers by incentivising long term contracts such as contracts for difference and power purchase agreements. This both removes the risk for investments and also protects consumers from price spikes. Of course, in the long term we must prioritise our transition away from fossil fuels and the swift deployment of renewable energy.

Aurore Lalucq (S&D). – Madame la Présidente, Monsieur le Commissaire, 2,4 %: c'est d'après l'Organisation internationale du travail la baisse des salaires réelle en Europe au premier semestre de 2022. Derrière ce chiffre, il y a des vies, des milliers de familles, et évidemment ce sont les plus pauvres et les plus précaires qui, du point de vue social et environnemental, sont les plus touchées. Cela, c'est la réalité.

En toute logique, il faudrait recommander d'augmenter les salaires, mais c'est sans compter sur une peur, toute théorique cette fois-ci, qui s'appelle la «boucle prix-salaires», et qui engendrerait un emballement de l'inflation. Pourtant, même le Fonds monétaire international nous dit qu'une telle boucle n'existe pas. Il nous dit même, d'ailleurs, qu'elle n'a jamais existé dans pareil contexte.

Il faut donc recommander aujourd'hui d'augmenter les salaires, mais aussi, comme l'a parfaitement dit Paul Tang, de trouver de l'argent pour mieux assurer un soutien, avec des politiques budgétaires généreuses. Je sais que la Commission européenne, et vous en particulier, Monsieur Gentiloni, êtes très ouverts sur ce sujet. On peut peut-être laisser de côté la TTF si cela ne fonctionne pas et passer à une taxation sur les produits financiers, et taxer surtout le patrimoine et les plus riches. Pourquoi ne pas faire comme les Américains, en taxant les rachats d'actions?

Anna Cavazzini (Verts/ALE). – Frau Präsidentin, Herr Kommissar, Herr Minister! Die Energiekrise und die Krise der Lebenshaltungskosten treffen Menschen unterschiedlich hart. Das haben heute schon viele Kolleginnen und Kollegen gesagt. Verbraucherinnen und Verbraucher, die es besonders schwer haben, die besonders vulnerabel sind, sind am stärksten betroffen.

Und auch wenn schon viele Maßnahmen von der Kommission, von den Mitgliedstaaten auf den Weg gebracht wurden: Strom und Heizkosten werden für einige diesen Winter unbezahlbar, und immer mehr Menschen sind von Stromsperren bedroht. Es ist wirklich eine schreckliche Vorstellung, wenn wir Menschen in diesem Winter buchstäblich im Dunkeln lassen. Aber an all die Rechten, die jetzt hier sagen, der Green Deal oder die Klimakrise oder die Klimapolitik seien daran schuld, denen sage ich: Ruft doch euren Freund Putin an und beschwert euch bei ihm!

Der Green Deal ist die Lösung unserer Probleme der Abhängigkeit von den fossilen Energien. Und wir in der EU sind außerdem zu Recht stolz auf unseren hohen Verbraucherschutz. Gerade jetzt brauchen die vulnerabelsten Verbraucherinnen und Verbraucher Regeln, die sie schützen.

Es ist gut, dass die Kommission diese Deklaration zwischen Verbraucherschutzverbänden und Energiefirmen fazilitiert hat. Aber all das ist weder bindend noch langfristig gedacht. Deshalb brauchen wir jetzt ein EU-weites, verbindliches Moratorium, um Stromsperren zu verhindern.

Im Binnenmarktausschuss haben wir außerdem bei der Reform der Gasrichtlinien ein Abschalteverbot für besonders verwundbare Verbraucherinnen und Verbraucher beschlossen, und diesem sollten sich die Mitgliedstaaten in den Verhandlungen unbedingt anschließen.

Filip De Man (ID). – Voorzitter, de oorzaak van inflatie en dalende koopkracht is de op hol geslagen energieprijs. Dat komt ervan als men bijvoorbeeld in Frankrijk desinvesteert in kerncentrales, terwijl dat land vroeger 75 % van zijn elektriciteit uit kernenergie haalde. Men waarschuwt nu in Frankrijk zelfs voor elektriciteitspannes, in het land dat dus vroeger driekwart betrok uit kernenergie. Of nog stupider, in België, waar de regeringen – ook met N-VA – de kernuitstap steevast bevestigden, zodat we nu duur gas moeten verbranden om de goedkope elektriciteit van onze kerncentrales te vervangen. Hoe gek kan je het bedenken. Nog sterker, daardoor hebben we straks te weinig gas om onze woningen en onze industrie te bevoorraden.

Natuurlijk beweren de andere partijen hier dat de oorlog in Oekraïne de oorzaak is, maar bij mijn weten hebben de Russen niet de kernuitstap beslist. Dat hebben jullie gedaan. Het resultaat van dit alles is dat we nu om dure lpg moeten gaan bedelen in Qatar bij de vrienden van de socialisten. Bravo!

Patryk Jaki (ECR). – Pani Przewodnicząca! Panie Komisarzu! Chcecie walczyć z powodami wysokich kosztów życia i inflacji – bardzo dobrze. Ja uważam, że powinniście zacząć od popatrzenia w lustro.

Jaki jest najważniejszy składnik inflacji? Wysokie ceny energii. A skąd one się wzięły? Skąd się wzięły wysokie ceny energii? Z tego, że od lat zmuszaliście wszystkich absurdalnym prawem do rezygnacji z węgla i do stawiania na gaz. I co się nagle stało? Putin wam zakręcił kurek i nie ma. Inflacja skoczyła do góry i węgiel trzeba ściągać z egzotycznych krajów, pomimo że mamy go w Europie bardzo dużo, szczególnie dużo jest go w Polsce.

Ale wy zamiast myśleć, jak mądrzejsi wam podpowiadali, że uzależnianie się od Putina tak się właśnie skończy, zajęci byliście czymś innym, mianowicie szukaniem rzekomego łamania praworządności w Polsce. I tak bardzo szukaliście tego łamania praworządności w Polsce, że nie zauważyliście reklamówek z Kataru we własnych szeregach. Tak się właśnie kończy takie postępowanie.

I zamiast wyciągać wnioski z tego, co robiliście, wy dalej robicie to samo. Właśnie Holandia – Panie Komisarzu, to jest coś dla Pana – właśnie Holandia: parędziesiąt nowych zwolnień dla rosyjskich firm. A co wy z tym robicie? A pomoc niemieckiej gospodarce, 200 miliardów, dlaczego jest na to zgoda? W czym to ma pomóc? To ma pomóc w walce z inflacją? Co to są za podwójne standardy?

I dalej blokujecie pomoc dla Polski, bez której Ukraina już by dawno upadła. To tak chcecie wyciągnąć Unię Europejską z kryzysu? To jest droga donikąd. Dalej robicie to samo i liczycie na inne efekty.

Marc Botenga (The Left). – Madame la Présidente, chers collègues, la revue *The Economist* – votre revue, la revue libérale et capitaliste de l'Union européenne et de l'Europe, que vous lisez tous – a calculé que, cet hiver, jusqu'à 185 000 personnes de plus pourraient mourir de froid, non pas uniquement à cause du froid, mais aussi à cause de votre inaction.

Votre inaction sur le blocage des prix de l'énergie: on vous demande un blocage du prix du gaz depuis un an. Comment est-ce que vous voulez que les gens fassent confiance à l'Union européenne, s'ils doivent attendre un an et potentiellement crever à la maison parce qu'ils ne savent pas payer la facture?

Votre inaction sur les surprofits des multinationales: ah, taxer vos potes les multinationales, c'est toujours trop compliqué, même quand ils font des surprofits et même quand les gens ne s'en sortent plus. Mais est-ce que vous n'avez pas honte de laisser faire cela? Ne soyez pas surpris quand les gens sortent dans la rue, font grève et se mobilisent pour vous mettre devant vos responsabilités. Parce que c'est cela qu'il faut faire aujourd'hui, vous mettre la pression, sinon vous n'écouterez jamais.

Tomislav Sokol (PPE). – Poštovana predsjedavajuća, povjereniče, kolegice i kolege, inflacija koja je u bitnom uvjetovana energetskom krizom i poremećajima u opskrbnim lancem lancima zbog rata u Ukrajini uvelike utjecala na kupovnu moć građana u Europskoj uniji.

Za isti iznos novca, potrošač u EU-u danas može kupiti 10% manje artikala nego u istom razdoblju lani. Jedan od uzroka energetske krize su i pogrešne političke odluke država koje su prije desetak godina odlučile zamijeniti jeftinu i pouzdanu nuklearnu energiju ruskim plinom i to treba jasno reći. U takvim okolnostima, upravo se diverzifikacija energetskih izvora, izgradnjom LNG terminala pokazala jednim od rješenja. Također, kao srednjoročno rješenje potrebno je jačati zajedničku nabavu energenata na svjetskom tržištu.

Međutim, kao dugoročno rješenje potrebno je u punom smislu izgraditi jedinstveno europsko energetsko tržište pod strogim nadzorom kako bi se spriječilo špekulacije. Samo energetski izgrađena Europa može pružiti sigurnost građanima i poduzećima u uvjetima krize.

Kim Van Sparrentak (Verts/ALE). – Madam President, Commissioner, Minister, people in Europe are suffering. They're sitting in ice-cold rooms, are unable to feed their families and are increasingly at risk of becoming homeless. If we want to be a Union that works for people, our response to the energy crisis has to go further than security of supply and the necessary reforms of the energy market. We need to take action for the people. And that's why I call upon the European Commission to use its competence to urgently present a proposal for emergency legislation that bans energy disconnections for everyone in Europe this winter.

But I also call upon you to ban home evictions this winter because our European goal to end homelessness by 2030 has never seemed further away. We need to take action to help people who can't pay their rent, food or energy bills. We have to help them get through this winter. Please show that you are here for the people and not just for businesses.

Jean-Paul Garraud (ID). – Madame la Présidente, la hausse des prix que nous subissons est particulièrement cruelle, car elle touche avant tout des biens de première nécessité: l'énergie et l'alimentation. Les prix de l'énergie explosent à cause des règles absurdes du marché européen de l'électricité et du sabotage délibéré de la filière nucléaire, qui nous garantissait une énergie bon marché. La fuite en avant dans la mondialisation, qui nous a conduits à renoncer à produire notre nourriture chez nous, rend notre approvisionnement alimentaire dépendant de l'étranger et nous met à la merci d'un conflit extérieur, comme celui qui a éclaté en Ukraine.

Face à cette situation dramatique, l'Union européenne étale son impuissance. Depuis plus de un an, la réforme du marché européen de l'électricité est une arlésienne qui ne verra jamais le jour. La proposition de la Commission de plafonner le gaz à un prix stratosphérique est un affront fait à nos concitoyens, qui vont souffrir du froid cet hiver.

Cette situation exceptionnelle n'appelle pas d'interminables conciliabules bruxellois, mais des mesures d'urgence à l'échelle de chaque État. Les pays qui ont fait le choix d'agir de leur côté parviennent à protéger leur population. L'Espagne et le Portugal paient leur électricité trois fois moins cher que les autres pays de l'Union européenne. Les Italiens, les Néerlandais, les Allemands et les Polonais peuvent respirer un peu, grâce à la baisse de la TVA sur l'énergie.

Les solutions immédiates et efficaces existent. Elles ne demandent qu'un peu de courage politique. Il faut baisser les taxes sur l'énergie et les produits alimentaires de première nécessité. Il faut en finir avec la stagnation des salaires, en proposant un pacte gagnant-gagnant aux entreprises, qui doivent être exonérées de charges lorsqu'elles augmentent leurs salariés. Toutes ces mesures sont finançables par la taxation des superprofits qui découlent directement de l'explosion des prix. Il n'est pas acceptable que quelques-uns s'enrichissent par la spéculation généralisée sur des produits vitaux, tandis que se nourrir correctement et se chauffer deviennent un luxe pour beaucoup.

Beata Kempa (ECR). – Pani Przewodnicząca! Panie Komisarzu! Szanowni Państwo! Europa niestety stała się ofiarą unijnej polityki energetycznej, fatalnie zaplanowanej i z uporem, naprawdę, prowadzonej przez Komisję Europejską i wiernych zielonej ideologii eurokratów. Przez lata walczyliście z węglem, z energetyką opartą na węglu, a dzisiaj ten węgiel bardzo pilnie sprowadzacie z egzotycznych krajów. Otwieracie nowe kopalnie, wygaszone elektrownie przywracacie do życia. A byliście przez lata głusi na argumenty tych, którzy głośno mówili, że unijna polityka energetyczna prowadzi Europę nad przepaść finansowej zapaści. Teraz wielu obywateli krajów Unii Europejskiej, również w moim kraju – Polki i Polacy – płaci koszty tych błędów. Płacą niestety koszty zgniłych gazowych deali z Putinem i z Rosją. Inflacja napędzana astronomicznymi cenami energii drenuje rodzinne budżety i wykańcza wszystkie nasze firmy. Jak mają podnosić pensje własnym pracownikom, kiedy z powodów kosztu energii muszą zamykać swoje zakłady pracy? W tym szalenie ciężkim okresie pozostaje nam jedno rozwiązanie: pilne zawieszenie obowiązywania zapisów pakietu klimatyczno- energetycznego i rezygnacja z pakietu „Fit for 55". Jest zbyt ambitny i nie na te czasy.

Sandra Pereira (The Left). – Senhora Presidente, em Portugal, os produtos alimentares aumentaram 18.9%, o gás de botija aumentou 19.5% e os produtos energéticos 27.6%. Assiste-se a um aumento brutal das rendas de casa, 9.2 % em Lisboa e 6% no Porto. A prestação da casa vai subir entre os 100 e 150 euros e cinco famílias são despejadas diariamente.

Estima-se que mais de 2 milhões de pessoas engordarão os números da pobreza. Esta é a realidade dos trabalhadores portugueses. Enquanto isso, o grande capital da distribuição, da energia, da banca, tem lucros recorde conseguidos à custa da especulação dos preços dos produtos e dos serviços, dos baixos salários, da precariedade, do aumento da exploração do trabalho e do empobrecimento dos povos.

O aumento geral dos salários e das pensões é, por isso, uma emergência. Não podem ser os mesmos de sempre a pagar. É uma emergência, porque é a única forma de as pessoas fazerem face ao constante e gravoso aumento do custo de vida. É uma emergência, porque dinamiza a economia, travando o desemprego e evitando uma crise maior e é uma emergência, porque é uma forma de redistribuir de forma mais justa a riqueza produzida. Não há desculpas para adiar o aumento geral dos salários e das pensões.

VORSITZ: KATARINA BARLEY

Vizepräsidentin

Estrella Durá Ferrandis (S&D). – Señora presidenta, señor comisario, mientras hoy debatimos acerca de qué medidas deben abordarse para frenar la tendencia inflacionista al alza, no hay palabras que puedan paliar el sufrimiento de muchas personas y familias que deben elegir si pagar el gas, la luz o el comer. No hay tiempo para más palabras. Nuestra reflexión debe transformarse en urgente actuación.

Necesitamos mecanismos permanentes y vinculantes que autorregulen las fluctuaciones del mercado y garanticen la sostenibilidad y supervivencia de nuestro sistema de bienestar social. Debemos introducir un procedimiento de vigilancia y corrección de los desequilibrios sociales en los Estados miembros en el marco de la revisión de las reglas fiscales; combatir el sinhogarismo y capar el alto precio de los costes en la vivienda; implantar medidas que aseguren empleos estables y de calidad; y convertir el SURE en mecanismo permanente. Y necesitamos una directiva sobre rentas mínimas que ayude a millones de europeos a llevar una vida decente, a salir de situaciones de pobreza.

Porque esta es la clave del modelo social europeo que debemos defender.

Thomas Waitz (Verts/ALE). – Frau Präsidentin, geschätzte Kommission! iPES Food schätzt, 20 bis 40 % der gestiegenen Lebensmittelpreise sind auf Spekulation zurückzuführen. Gestern hatten wir hier den slowenischen Ministerpräsidenten, vormals ein sehr erfolgreicher Energiehändler, der uns hier klar gesagt hat: Ein guter Teil der Energiepreise ist auf Spekulation zurückzuführen. Er weiß, wovon er spricht.

Wir haben derzeit die Möglichkeit, in der Überprüfung zur Regulierung von Marktspekulationen, von diesem Gesetz, Verbesserungen herbeizuführen. Die Vorschläge der Kommission sind immer noch nicht weitreichend genug. Derzeit haben wir einen lascheren Umgang als die USA. Wir müssen endlich Reformen angehen, um Lebensmittelpreise und Energiepreise nicht der Spekulation zu überlassen!

Die Europäische Kommission und EU-Agenturen wie die Europäische Wertpapier- und Marktaufsichtsbehörde sind aufgefordert, endlich amtlich zu überprüfen, wie groß der Spekulationsanteil ist. Denn es kann nicht sein, dass EU-Bürgerinnen frieren und hungern, während sich einige Spekulanten ein großes Einkommen machen.

Dem müssen wir etwas entgegensetzen! Ich bitte Sie, endlich zu handeln.

Denis Nesci (ECR). – Signora Presidente, signor Commissario, onorevoli colleghi, la crisi pandemica prima e le conseguenze del conflitto russo-ucraino ucraino dopo hanno generato una spirale inflazionistica con tassi a doppia cifra, che non si vedeva da tempo ormai nel nostro continente.

È il momento di soluzioni rapide e urgenti, che diano risposte e supporto a consumatori, famiglie e imprese, a partire dal contrasto dell'incremento dei prezzi energetici sul quale ci auguriamo decisioni già al prossimo Consiglio europeo per fermare la speculazione.

Da mesi, ormai, le quotazioni del prezzo del gas sul mercato europeo, oltre che dalle conseguenze dell'azione criminale di Putin, rispondono a logiche puramente speculazionistiche. Viste le circostanze, ancora una volta, serve la vera solidarietà dell'Europa da parte di chi, in questi mesi, ha accumulato profitti extra.

Infine, alla luce dello scenario economico attuale con i tassi di interesse in salita, credo che occorra un segnale concreto dell'Unione europea e degli Stati membri per agevolare le esigenze di consumatori, famiglie e imprese attraverso una proroga delle moratorie per imprese e mutui. Su questi temi non servono rinvii, ma decisioni.

Özlem Demirel (The Left). – Frau Präsidentin! Offiziell ist jeder Vierte in der EU von Armut bedroht. Im Schnitt stiegen die Preise um 11,5 %, die Löhne aber nicht. Im EU-Schnitt 3 % Reallohnverlust.

Wir können heute also über Armut trotz Arbeit, Kinderarmut, Altersarmut, Wohnungslosigkeit und horrend hohe Mieten sprechen. Wir können aber auch über die Kehrseite, über Superreiche und Aktionäre, sprechen. Die zehn reichsten EU-Bürger besitzen laut Forbes ungefähr 539 Milliarden Euro. Während das normale Volk den Gürtel enger schnallen soll, bauen sie ihre Macht und Ihren Einfluss aus.

In jeder Krise machen sie aus ihrem Geld noch mehr Geld. Doch Geld arbeitet nicht, sondern die Arbeitenden schaffen die Reichtümer. Aber die Arbeitenden und ganz Armen kommen nicht mehr über die Runden: Heizen, Butter, Brot, Gemüse – alles wird teurer. Superreiche spekulieren auf all das und noch mehr in ihrem Börsencasino. Damit muss Schluss sein.

Wir brauchen ein Verbot von Spekulation auf Lebensmittel, ein Verbot der Geschäftemacherei mit Wohnen, ein Verbot der Steueroasen für Superreiche. Es geht nicht um Weihnachtsgeschenke oder Almosen für die Armen und Arbeitenden, sondern um ihr Recht.

Vilija Blinkevičiūtė (S&D). – Ačiū, pone Pirmininke, pone Komisare. Nežmoniškai išaugusios maisto ir energetikos kainos tiesiog stumia mažas ir vidutines pajamas gaunančius žmones į skurdą ir socialinę atskirtį. Tačiau būtini sprendimai labai vėluoja. Nesuprantu, kodėl kai kurios valstybės narės iki šiol netaiko lengvatinio PVM tarifo net būtiniausiems maisto produktams, o tuo tarpu įmonių akcininkų godumas yra nepateisinamas. Pagaliau nesuprantama, kodėl kompensaciniai mechanizmai taikomi vienodai tiek gaunantiems mažas ir vidutines pajamas, tiek netgi ir dideles pajamas. Privalome užtikrinti, kad ši sunki kainų infliacijos našta nebūtų uždėta ant pažeidžiamiausių ir mažiausias pajamas gaunančių mūsų žmonių. Labai gaila, tačiau net ir Europos Sąjungos lygmeniu nėra solidarumo ir politinės valios susitarti dėl sprendimų energetikos srityje. Vakar matėme energetikos ministrų fiasko susitarti dėl viršutinės dujų kainos.

Bronis Ropė (Verts/ALE). – Ačiū, Pirmininke, gerbiamas Komisare, gerbiamas Ministre, kolegos. Akivaizdu, kad laisva rinka nesugeba subalansuoti kainų kriziniais laikotarpiais. Vienas procentas žmonių kontroliuoja pusę pasaulio turto. Pandemijos metu šie žmonės uždirbo rekordinius pelnus ir dar labiau padidino socialinę nelygybę. Tai norima pakartoti dabar, pasinaudojant Rusijos sukeltu karu. O ką daro politikai? Mes tik kalbame. Kada pradėsime riboti pelnus maisto sektoriuje? Be maisto žmonės neišgyvens. Trečdaliu padidėję maisto kainos yra katastrofa, kurios nenorima matyti, nes vis dar giname turtinguosius. Komisare, kur mūsų veiksmų planas? Jis turėjo būti patvirtintas dar pavasarį. Kviečiu baigti kalbas ir imtis konkrečių darbų.

Cristian Terheș (ECR). – Madam President, dear Commissioner, Minister, emissions must have a price that changes our behaviour. This is what Ursula von der Leyen said in this plenary in 2019 in her opening statement as a candidate for President of the European Commission. Three years later, we see and feel the effect of our newly envisioned European Union, an EU where prosperity is replaced with poverty, where respect for fundamental rights is replaced with more state control, where governmental transparency is replaced with secrecy to protect private or corporate interests, where decisions based on reason are replaced with those based on ideology – all with a clear intent to change our behaviour.

The current crisis that is affecting all of us is mainly being caused by this decision of the European Commission, which is more focused on changing people's behaviour than serve them. While people got poorer and small businesses closed down, especially during the pandemic, some big businesses made huge and untaxed profits. EU needs pragmatic, reasonable, common sense solutions based on facts, not neo-Marxist ideology, which is trying to change the reality to fit its argument.

Commissioner, people cannot eat or burn carbon credits. I call on the European Commission to stop blocking the use or any investments in coal, nuclear or gas power plants, so we can keep up with the demand for energy and produce affordable energy.

Ilan De Basso (S&D). – Herr talman! Idag slog inflationen nya rekord i Sverige och det är Putin som bär huvudansvaret. Men energikrisen är också ett europeiskt misslyckande. Marknaden fungerar helt enkelt inte.

Detta kräver mer radikala lösningar, en fundamental reform av EU:s elmarknad. Alla våra förslag kommer att syfta till att sänka elpriserna. Samtidigt måste vi också stödja hushållen. Den svenska regeringen har med sitt haveri försatt många svenska hushåll i en omöjlig situation. Därför vill vi svenska socialdemokrater införa en elräkningsakut och hjälpa hela Sverige att klara elkostnaderna i vinter. Till skillnad från regeringen förstår vi att folk norr om Dalälven också har det tufft. Vi socialdemokrater blundar inte för de misslyckanden som marknaden nu visar. Vi ska agera kraftfullt när våra medborgare pressas.

Paolo Gentiloni, *Member of the Commission*. – Madam President, honourable Members, I think that this debate was very useful to share and to give us the sense of a social emergency that we have to address.

Very important, in my view, first to understand where this social emergency is coming from. I am not referring to, of course, our historical problems of social inequalities, but I am referring to the recent social emergency. And I think that the reason is not on the green transition. The reason is not on sanctions. The main reason is the Russian aggression in Ukraine and the consequences of this Russian aggression on prices, energy, food, inflation.

How to face this challenge? I think several good points came out of this discussion. I will only stress three things.

First, the emergency. So our social safety nets, the contribution that we can give at European level to those social safety nets. Important I think that we reached an agreement on the recommendation on the minimum income and ensuring active inclusion. Important the Minimum Wages Directive. Important to address the windfall profits both at EU and national level.

Second is energy. We have some good news: tonight we reached the agreement of this new tool, RePowerEU, but we know that further steps are needed to address the problems for the reform of the electricity market.

And third is what kind of reaction we are giving overall to this. I don't think that the same old recipes are those that we are supposed to use now.

We have new tools. This NextGenerationEU recovery plan is the basis for investing on the resilience of our societies. We are proud of our social model, but we want to strengthen this social model also with the common resources of NextGenerationEU.

And then we need to invest more in the European competitiveness because we have to avoid that the social crisis which is already there in the purchasing power becomes gradually also an unemployment crisis, which is not there at the moment. But of course, if we lose competitiveness, if we don't invest in our competitiveness, the risk is there. So I think that also this part of the response is very, very important.

Mikuláš Bek, *President-in-Office of the Council.* – Madam President, honourable Members, Commissioner, thank you again for this debate. It is indeed very timely given the precarious situation of our most vulnerable citizens and businesses; the cohesion of our societies is at stake.

We are all well aware that there will be a price to pay for all of us as a result of Russia's actions. We need to make sure the burden is fairly distributed. The issues debated remain at the core of the Council agenda, as demonstrated by last week's discussions on the European Semester and the European Care Strategy, this morning's agreement on REPowerEU and many others. As I said here earlier today, the Czech Presidency is working hard to find a solution regarding gas price caps, and I am cautiously optimistic that we could still achieve results in the days to come.

Difficult times require determination, solidarity and the right policy response. This means finding the right balance between the economic, employment and social dimensions of the Semester. Our debate in the Council, and this one here today, and our continuous endeavours give me confidence that, despite all the difficulties, we are all working for the same goal – helping our citizens to go through this multidimensional crisis.

Die Präsidentin. – Die Aussprache ist geschlossen.

Schriftliche Erklärungen (Artikel 171)

Victor Negrescu (S&D), *în scris.* – Inflația galopantă, prețurile crescute la energie și erodarea puterii de cumpărare sunt provocările curente pe care trebuie să le adresăm de îndată cu măsuri concrete, cu impact pozitiv imediat în viața cetățenilor. Oamenii nu trebuie să poarte povara economică a acestui context și nu putem lăsa pe nimeni în urmă.

Situația este cu atât mai gravă cu cât creșterea costurilor are un impact semnificativ în primul rând asupra categoriilor vulnerabile, familiilor cu venituri mici sau vârstnicilor care se confruntau deja cu multe dificultăți.

Este important să folosim fondurile disponibile în mod eficient, dar și să identificăm acele resurse noi care să ne permită implementarea soluțiilor necesare. Un prim pas este să oprim specula de pe piața energiei, identificată de experții în materie, și să îi taxăm pe cei care au obținut profituri uriașe.

Implementarea salariului minim european, demers pentru care grupul nostru politic și PSD au depus eforturi semnificative, poate să asigure salarii decente pretutindeni în Europa, iar lucrătorii să fie plătiți mai bine.

Totodată, în perspectiva Anului european al competențelor, trebuie să ne axăm și pe măsuri legate de calificare și recalificare, pentru a spori șansa lucrătorilor pe piața muncii. Sunt multe de făcut, însă soluțiile nu pot aștepta. Doar împreună putem trece cu bine peste aceste provocări.

Guido Reil (ID), *schriftlich.* – Ja, die Lebenshaltungskosten sind spektakulär angestiegen. Und jetzt stellt die EU sich als das soziale Gewissen vor. Mit höheren Löhnen und noch mehr Umverteilung sollen die steigenden Lebenshaltungskosten bekämpft werden. Auch die zunehmende sozialpolitische Regulierung – die Vorschläge zu einem EU-Mindestlohn und Lohntransparenz – wird als soziale Gerechtigkeit vorgestellt. In Wirklichkeit ist hauptsächlich die EU selbst schuld.

Mit der katastrophalen Geldpolitik der EZB und ihrer Klimapolitik. Mit ihrer Klimapolitik führt die EU eine Politik der sozialen Kälte. Sozialpolitik geht um den Schutz der Schwächeren in unserer Gesellschaft. Die EU-Elite tut genau das Gegenteil. Sie hat Energie zur wichtigsten sozialen Frage des 21. Jahrhunderts gemacht. Und jetzt versucht sie dies zu verschleiern.

12. Verteidigung der Europäischen Union gegen den Missbrauch einzelstaatlicher Vetos (Aussprache)

Die Präsidentin. – Als nächster Punkt der Tagesordnung folgen die Erklärungen des Rates und der Kommission zur Verteidigung der Europäischen Union gegen den Missbrauch einzelstaatlicher Vetos (2022/3013(RSP)).

Mikuláš Bek, *President-in-Office of the Council.* – Madam President, honourable Members, Commissioner, this presidency, we have experienced, like many others before us, many difficult discussions in the Council.

But experience shows that diplomacy and perseverance pay off since, in the overwhelming majority of cases, we manage to find solutions to overcome our differences and break the deadlock. True, this takes countless hours of talks and efforts to understand each other's positions. Translating sometimes into late night or early morning compromises like we have been experiencing these days.

But this is how the Union works. The number of files which remain blocked over prolonged periods of time is rather insignificant, statistically speaking. Our swift reaction to the recent crisis shows our unity and capacity to find agreement in the interest of us all.

I would like to recall that unanimity is a voting modality provided by the treaties, albeit currently an exception from the rule, which is qualified majority voting, unanimity is typically applicable to decisions in the common foreign and security policy area. Well, treaties require the Council to act unanimously; the Act can only be adopted when Member States vote in favour. But, importantly, the treaty provides that abstentions do not prevent the act from being adopted.

In the area of the common foreign and security policy, there is also the so-called constructive abstention, which allows a Member State that uses this possibility not to apply the adopted decision while permitting the Union to go forward. This is what has been successfully used in the context of the European Peace Facility.

While there is a lot we can do through discussions and persuasion, a Member State remains free when expressing its vote in the Council, and this is a fundamental element of our European democracy. After all, Council members are responsible towards their citizens and their national parliaments for the action, including how they vote in the Council.

Treaty change would, of course, be one of the possible avenues that may also be considered to bring more areas under qualified majority voting. However, as you know, it is a very heavy procedure. This possibility has been discussed in the follow up to the Conference on the Future of Europe. More importantly, in many areas, it is possible to switch from unanimity to qualified majority voting without modifying the treaties. Indeed, the treaties contain one general and the six specific so-called passerelle clauses. They allow the European Council or the Council also acting by unanimity, but through a simple procedure, to switch to a qualified majority in the Council.

As a follow up to the Conference on the Future of Europe the Council has started discussing the possible use of passerelle clauses to switch to qualified majority. The Czech Presidency has notably initiated exploratory discussions on this issue, focusing on the common foreign and security policy.

I look very much forward to hearing your views. I will have to leave the room for a short while as I have a duty to sign several legislative acts together with President Metsola. But my colleagues will be here and report to me afterwards. My personal and friendly advice to honourable Members would be to, instead of attacking the Council as the institution, rather focus the energy on reaching out towards national parliaments, as these are the bodies that national governments are accountable to.

Paolo Gentiloni, *Member of the Commission.* – Madam President, Minister, honourable Members, we all know that the Lisbon Treaty extended the system of qualified majority voting to a large number of policy areas on which the Council used to take decisions by unanimity. For instance, in the area of justice and home affairs.

The Lisbon Treaty also added the new so-called pastoral clause – which the Minister was referring to – giving the Council or the European Council the possibility to move from unanimity to qualified majority voting in certain areas for certain acts. However, unanimity still applies under the current Treaties in a number of policy areas, and the pastoral clauses remain unused – also because you need unanimity to deliver the pastoral clause.

The Commission has long been pushing to move towards more qualified majority voting. This was also called for in this Commission's political guidelines from July 2019. Policy fields that would benefit from this change are energy, taxation, or some aspects of the common foreign and security policy such as sanctions and human rights.

In the Conference on the Future of Europe, citizens also called for moving from unanimity to qualified majority voting in some policy areas. Today, I can only confirm that the Commission fully supports the call for moving away from unanimity in some policy areas. This can already be done under the rules of the current Treaties.

We stand ready to engage with both Parliament and the Council on this matter, and the Commission will always be on the side of those who want to reform the EU to make it work better.

Monika Hohlmeier, *im Namen der PPE-Fraktion*. – Frau Präsidentin, lieber Herr Kommissar, lieber Herr Minister, liebe Kolleginnen und Kollegen! Ich bin nun seit dem Jahr 2009 hier in diesem Europäischen Parlament, und mir fällt über die Jahre hinweg immer wieder auf – lieber Kollege Verhofstadt, du bist noch länger hier als ich –, dass es bei bestimmten prekären Dossiers immer wieder zu nationalen Vetos kommt und dass es immer wieder zu langen, langen, langen Verzögerungen kommt, weil ein Mitgliedstaat sich querstellt.

Außenpolitisch ist das außerordentlich prekär, wenn ich mir anschaue, dass wir jetzt den Fall Ungarn gehabt haben, das, um für sich selbst im Land inadäquat den Konditionalitätsmechanismus außer Kraft zu setzen und die Standards, die die Kommission zu Recht einverlangt, unterlaufen zu können, versucht, den Rat zu erpressen, dass er seine Hilfen für die Ukraine nur dann bekommt, wenn die Ungarn entsprechend sozusagen weniger rechtsstaatliche Standards walten lassen müssen.

Ich muss sagen: Ich kann meiner Empörung gar nicht genug Ausdruck verleihen, dass ein Mitgliedstaat der Europäischen Union und Viktor Orbán dies überhaupt versuchen, weil schlicht und einfach die Hilfe für die Ukraine zwingend notwendig ist und interne haushälterische Fragestellungen und Fragestellungen zur Rechtsstaatlichkeit nichts mit außenpolitischer Handlungsfähigkeit zu tun haben dürfen.

Gratulation an die tschechische Ratspräsidentschaft, dass Sie es geschafft haben, in einem schwierigen Drahtseilakt zum ersten Mal überhaupt den Konditionalitätsmechanismus einzusetzen und trotzdem eine Lösung zu finden.

Wir werden noch viele Fragen zu beantworten haben. Außenpolitisch brauchen wir endlich eine Handlungsfähigkeit, ohne dass wir Einstimmigkeit brauchen.

VORSITZ: OTHMAR KARAS

Vizepräsident

Domènec Ruiz Devesa, *en nombre del Grupo S&D*. – Señor presidente Karas, señor presidente en ejercicio del Consejo, señor comisario Gentiloni, he tomado nota, por supuesto, de lo que han señalado. Se puede hablar mucho de las pasarelas, pero sabemos que para activar las pasarelas hace falta la unanimidad. Por tanto, creo que no podemos obviar que es absolutamente necesaria actualmente una reforma de los Tratados para poder resolver este tema.

Pero creo que incluso antes de plantear eso es muy importante que, sobre todo desde la Comisión, señor Gentiloni, se tomen más en serio el encontrar maneras de superar el uso —como dice el debate— abusivo del veto nacional. Porque el Consejo no lo va a poder hacer. Acabamos de ver lo que ha pasado con Hungría, no es la primera vez. El Gobierno del señor Orbán —la enésima vez que utiliza el veto como instrumento de chantaje político— dice: paralizo los 18 000 millones de ayuda a Ucrania y paralizo el acuerdo del impuesto mínimo de sociedades de la OCDE hasta que no se me dé, en este caso, una rebaja. Es verdad que no ha sido muy grande, pero, en cualquier caso, ha obtenido una rebaja sobre los fondos que se le habían congelado por razón de falta de respeto del Estado de Derecho.

¿Cómo puede ser eso posible? Que haya un acuerdo político que relativice una sanción por no respetar el Estado de Derecho. Pero es que, además, había una salida, que ustedes la habían apuntado —y también el Consejo, por cierto —. Luego, no sé por qué, la cambiaron. Consistía en encontrar una manera de resolver el paquete de ayuda a Ucrania a 26. Además, tenía usted también —y eso le afecta, comisario Gentiloni— una solución para el impuesto de la OCDE, que era el artículo 116. ¿Hasta cuándo la Comisión no va a tener la valentía de activar de una vez ese artículo, que permitiría resolver la cuestión de la fiscalidad por mayoría cualificada y terminar de una vez con el chantaje político de Orbán?

Guy Verhofstadt,*on behalf of the Renew Group*. – Mr President, so it's not only a question of, 'Ah, finally we find a solution, even with the unanimity', it's the time we lose. That's even a more important problem. So it's not only a question of saying, Yeah, but finally, in the European Union, after six months, nine months, one year, two years – the migration package is already seven years but OK, that's only an exception maybe – we find the solution. No, it's not about that. It's also about the time you lose. How you manage Europe in the modern world if you need seven years to agree on a migration package. If you need six months to agree on some sanctions in the case of a war against Ukraine, that's the problem.

And that, apparently, Mr Bek and the Czech Presidency and the whole Council doesn't want to understand. Now they are saying, 'Look, it's going better because the last packages prove that it is working'. Some people are even waxing lyrical about the agreement that has been found in the beginning of this week. In fact, what is happening is that two evident files with no contestation – the 80 billion loan to Ukraine and a minimum tax on multinationals – are traded against two disputable concessions to Orbán: the approval of his recovery plan on the one hand, and then lowering the frozen amount from 6.3 to 5.8 billion. Well, I predict you something. I predict to you this at this moment that this is not the end, Mr President, of this file. What Orbán will do is to continue every new file in 2023 or to lower that amount, or to escape completely on the rule-of-law mechanism. This is not the end of the blackmail. It's only the start of the blackmail, the agreement that you have found.

So, I think it's high time to abolish vetoes. We have done, you have done, President Metsola has done a request based on Article 48. What I ask for is a little bit of respect of the Council towards the Parliament. If the Parliament – based on the Treaties, on Article 48 – is asking for a convention, at least that they have respect for the Parliament and answer that request, and are saying yes or no. For me it's the same. Say no, say no against the citizens of the European Union, who in the Conference on the Future of Europe asked for such a convention and abolishing unanimity, but at least show respect for the only democratically chosen institution of this continent.

Daniel Freund, *on behalf of the Verts/ALE Group*. – Mr President, dear colleagues, if Vladimir Putin had designed the European Union, I think he would have given Viktor Orbán a veto because it makes it so easy for him to paralyse us, because he only needs to turn one person in the room – blackmail, bribery, cheap gas, I don't know what, but this is a threat for us.

Of course, back in the days maybe this might have served to protect the interest of the smallest Member State. But I think today in a Union of 27 the reality looks very different. It's no longer to protect minorities, it's a tool for extortion and blackmail. We managed this time, luckily, we have overcome the veto on the Ukraine aid. But we'll be back at the same point in the beginning of February when we have to prolong the Russia sanctions. It will be exactly the same.

So if Viktor Orbán wants to do the deeds of Vladimir Putin, that's his choice. But for all of us other ones that want to help Ukraine, you know, this should not be the obstacle for us to do it. In times of war, veto on essential decisions is a security threat for the European Union. So let's not keep talking about it. We have discussed this for years in the conference, there is an overwhelming majority of citizens that want this. There is the national parliaments that want this. We here in the European Parliament have been very clear we want this. We have taken a vote with a large majority. Let's call a convention, answer to our vote and our proposal under Article 48 and let us put an end to national vetoes in the European Union.

Gilles Lebreton, *au nom du groupe ID*. – Monsieur le Président, chers collègues, l'unanimité est un principe fondamental de la construction européenne. Elle est l'arme qui permet à chaque État membre de l'Union de bloquer une décision qui porterait atteinte à ses intérêts vitaux.

Le général de Gaulle l'a rappelé, au nom de la France, en 1965, quand il a pratiqué la politique de la chaise vide pour contraindre l'Europe à renoncer à lui imposer une réforme dont il ne voulait pas. Sa résistance victorieuse a débouché sur le compromis de Luxembourg de janvier 1966, toujours en vigueur, qui consacre ce pouvoir de veto national.

L'unanimité est encore inscrite dans les traités européens. Elle est requise pour les décisions du Conseil européen et pour les décisions les plus importantes du Conseil. Je condamne donc sa remise en cause par le président Macron et par le débat d'aujourd'hui.

La majorité de ce Parlement reproche à la Hongrie d'avoir opposé son veto à l'aide à l'Ukraine pour protester contre le gel de ses subventions. J'estime au contraire que la Hongrie a eu raison de le faire. Sa fermeté vient d'ailleurs de lui permettre de trouver un arrangement avec l'Union. Protégeons l'unanimité, car c'est le seul principe qui permet aux États membres de conserver leur souveraineté au sein de l'Union.

Jacek Saryusz-Wolski, *on behalf of the ECR Group*. – Mr President, dear colleagues, many want to abolish the veto to make things easier, not really better. Democracy should be fair and honest, not easy – and easy for whom? Democracy is difficult. Autocracy is easy. It should remain the basic right of Member States, as it is the last rampart of defence for the small, weak and vulnerable against the strong, big and bullish. It is rooted in the tradition and history of EU. It is a normal procedure in the EU, and big Member States use it on a regular basis.

It is an expression of the wisdom of the founding fathers, whose wish was to create a balanced community of equals. Since Lisbon, the few vetoes left remain the only way for small and medium-sized Member States to protect themselves against the diktat hegemony of bigger states and their directorates. The veto serves the vital interests of the abused, the weapon of the weak meant to establish the balance when they face a risk of being bridled and abused.

Removing the veto would also put in danger the cohesion of the EU. The EU is about consensus, not divisions. To those who demand the cancellation of the veto, do it yourselves first. Be the example by giving up the veto for your countries through a solemn declaration not to use it; create an enhanced avant-garde. Do not practice hypocrisy. Germany declared that it would veto enlargement if the veto were not removed from the Treaty. It is Kafkaesque and grotesque. To those who demand the cancellation of the veto, do it yourselves first. Solemnly declare not to use it. Good luck.

Kinga Gál (NI). – Elnök Úr! Elfogadhatatlan a vétókérdéssel kapcsolatos kettős mérce az Európai Unióban. Súlyosan hipokrita magatartás, hogy miközben Magyarországot – igaztalanul és alaptalanul – az európai egység szétverésével és vétózással vádolják, amikor bátran kiáll álláspontja és értékei mellett, addig a régi tagállamok következmények nélkül megtehetik ezt sokkal súlyosabb ügyekben. Ezeket az eseteket csak az egyetértés hiányának lehet nevezni és sosem vétónak. A mai vita címe is már ezt az elfogultságot tükrözi. Politikai célból félrevezető. Amit itt a balliberális mainstream vétónak nevez, az nem más, mint az alapszerződésekben rögzített egyhangú döntéshozatal, ami a jóhiszemű együttműködés alapja.

Az európai integrációt a tagállamok hozták létre, ők a Szerződések urai. Az alapítók épp ezért garantálták azt a jogot, hogy nélkülük a számukra fontos kérdésben ne lehessen dönteni. Az egyhangú döntéshozatal eltörlése a tagállamok szuverenitását szüntetné meg, a brüsszeli centralizáció kiteljesedése lenne. Ellehetetlenítené a máshogy gondolkodást, az egyet nem értést, és aláásná az európai egységet. Az Unió nem válhat a föderalista érdekeket kiszolgáló Európai Egyesült Államokká.

Der Präsident. – Zu der Kollegin und zu den Vorrednern möchte ich schon sehr klar sagen: Die Position dieses Hauses ist sehr klar, genauso wie jene der Konferenz zur Zukunft Europas. Wir wollen eine demokratischere Europäische Union. Veto ist Veto!

Das Veto bedeutet Blockade, und das Veto ist undemokratisch. Das Veto ist keine Frage von Groß oder Klein. Das Veto ist eine Frage von Zukunft oder Blockade. Daher, glaube ich, sollten wir das auch in dieser Deutlichkeit sagen: Der Prozess der Europäischen Union war immer, dass die Integration begleitet wurde von einer Demokratisierung und die Demokratisierung von einer Parlamentarisierung. Einstimmigkeit passt nicht zu einer parlamentarischen Demokratie. Sie ist unparlamentarisch und undemokratisch.

Diese Kritik richtet sich nicht nur an Ungarn, sondern wir haben auch andere Länder in dieser Woche gehabt, mein eigenes oder die Niederlande, die ebenfalls ihr Veto eingelegt haben.

Jacek Saryusz-Wolski (ECR). – Mr President you just abused your right as Chair of the meeting.

Der Präsident. – Nein, das tue ich deshalb nicht, weil ich nur wiederholt habe, was die Mehrheitsposition dieses Hauses ist und was die Mehrheitsposition der Konferenz zur Zukunft Europas ist.

Dass der Demokratisierungsprozess immer mit einem Parlamentarisierungsprozess Hand in Hand geht, das hat nichts damit zu tun, dass wir hier unterschiedliche Meinungen haben. Aber es geht doch auch um die Klarstellung der Mehrheitsposition dieses Hauses.

Vladimír Bilčík (PPE). – Mr President, Commissioner, colleagues, the past days have been difficult times for our House. I am convinced, however, that the best remedy to European problems is a clear, strong and unified European answer. Whether it concerns a massive corruption scandal, or Russia's attack against Ukraine, European unity is what keeps our continent going forward.

The European Union has lived through many political crises in the past decade – financial and debt crises, security crises, migration crises, Brexit, the pandemic and Russia's war of aggression. The common denominator of our successful answers to this crisis has been our unity. Unity in purchasing vaccines, adopting sanctions on Russia, fully standing behind Ukraine and protecting our fundamental freedoms and the rule of law.

This House, too, is strongest when united across party lines. Yes, this means that European unity is fiercely fought over and, at times, comes through after complicated negotiations and public disagreements. The ultimate goal of political leaders, those from Member States, from the European institutions and from this House, must be, however, to find common ground and remain united, especially in times of war and crisis.

National vetoes have to be the absolute nuclear option, not a tactical weapon, and they should not undermine the common European interests of the rest of the Union. I find vetoes that weaken us in times of war and that question our fundamental freedoms counterproductive and dangerous.

Dear colleagues, indeed unity is what keeps our Union capable, powerful and attractive, and unity based on common European interest is the only meaningful answer to the EU's Schengen enlargement and to Europe's resolute support for Ukraine's European future.

Brando Benifei (S&D). – Signor Presidente, onorevoli colleghi, il veto all'istituzione di un debito comune europeo; il veto al tetto del prezzo del gas; il veto all'ingresso di alcuni paesi nell'area Schengen; da ultimissimo, l'ennesimo veto ricattatorio, poi revocato, di Orbán ai 18 miliardi di aiuti all'Ucraina e alla *minimum tax* europea sul fatturato delle multinazionali.

Un'Unione europea preda di nazionalismi ed egoismi di turno non funziona.

Ecco perché, per mettere fine ai bracci di ferro tra Bruxelles e gli Stati membri, e fra loro, serve finalmente abolire il diritto di veto e costruire una vera democrazia sovranazionale. I cittadini europei, oggi, ci chiedono di decidere rapidamente sui temi più importanti, ovvero completare un'unione energetica, aumentare sicurezza sociale e salari, difendere lo Stato di diritto, dare vita a una difesa comune europea.

La Conferenza sul futuro dell'Europa e la risoluzione votata da questo Parlamento nel giugno scorso indicano, in tal senso, la strada maestra: l'istituzione di una convenzione per la riforma dei trattati che dia vita a una vera integrazione europea. Io dico anche costruendo diversi livelli di integrazione, permettendo a chi vuole di fare di più senza impedirlo da parte di chi vuole fare meno insieme.

Gli Stati che vogliono andare avanti devono poterlo fare, un'Europa unita può fare di più, meglio e più velocemente. Ascoltiamo le richieste dei cittadini europei e non mettiamo il veto al futuro delle nuove generazioni.

Mittwoch, 14. Dezember 2022

Sandro Gozi (Renew). – Monsieur le Président, Monsieur le Commissaire, l'Europe des vetos, c'est l'Europe de l'inaction, des retards, des chantages et des déceptions. C'est grotesque. Encore récemment, lors de la conférence sur l'avenir de l'Europe, les citoyens ont demandé une défense européenne, une union de l'énergie et une puissance globale. Tout cela est aujourd'hui nié par les vetos des uns et l'hypocrisie des autres. La Hongrie d'Orbán en est l'exemple criant, bien sûr – Budapest en use et abuse –, mais ce n'est pas le seul.

Le problème est bien plus profond, car la pratique du veto pollue les esprits et dérègle les systèmes. Cette dérive se joue notamment au Conseil européen, qui absorbe toutes les décisions importantes et étend de facto la pratique du consensus, et donc du veto, bien au-delà de la lettre des traités. L'immigration en est l'exemple flagrant. On pourrait prendre pas mal de décisions à la majorité, mais on s'enfonce depuis plusieurs années dans une impasse. Moins d'efficacité, moins de démocratie et moins de transparence.

Si vous lisez les traités, chers collègues, le rôle des ministres – il n'est pas là – est considérable. Si vous regardez la pratique, depuis que le président du Conseil européen est permanent, c'est la «sherpacratie» qui dispose. Ce sont les sherpas, et pas les ministres. Ce devrait donc être un problème aussi pour le Conseil des ministres. Cette année, nous célébrons les trente ans du marché unique. Eh bien, si nous avions gardé les vetos, nous serions encore en train d'attendre la première décision sur la liberté de circulation.

Je l'ai dit au Conseil: vous ignorez toutes nos demandes; vous ignorez la demande sur la loi électorale européenne; vous ignorez la demande sur la modification des traités; vous ignorez la demande sur l'activation des clauses-passerelles; vous ignorez la demande sur la révision du principe des partis politiques européens. Vous devez apprendre à respecter un peu plus le Parlement européen et avoir le courage de dire oui ou non à nos demandes.

(l'orateur accepte de répondre à une intervention «carton bleu»)

Ladislav Ilčić (ECR), *intervencija zatražena podizanjem plave kartice.* – Poštovani kolega, dakle, vi biste branili Europsku uniju od zemalja članica?

Pa Europska unija je sastavljena od zemalja članica, bez zemalja članica nema Europske unije. I vaš kolega je u uvodu rekao da je Europski parlament jedino demokratski izabrano tijelo. Pa što je s Vijećem ? Pa tamo su predstavnici legalno izabranih, demokratski izabranih nacionalnih vlada i to na izborima na kojima izlazi dvostruko više ljudi nego na izbore za Europski parlament. Dakle, oni imaju dvostruko veći demokratski potencijal od ove kuće.

Dakle, vi ne branite Europsku uniju nego branite svoje pozicije i politike koje želite nametnuti od naroda koji te politika ne želi.

Sandro Gozi (Renew), *blue-card reply.* – I am not sure I have seen a question here, but I will try to give an answer. I never said that the Council, the European Council or the Council of Ministers is less legitimate than the European Parliament, I said the European Parliament plays a role, but no, I didn't say that.

But I don't understand why we should not apply the Treaty. And at the moment we are not applying the Treaty because this shift, that push towards the European Council, prevents the Council of Ministers and the European Parliament from doing their job according to the letter of the Treaty. That is the first question.

The second question I mean, who did say that deciding by majority is less democratic than deciding by unanimity? Who said the opposite?

Gwendoline Delbos-Corfield (Verts/ALE). – Mr President, dear smaller Member States, by size or by population, I know you have always fought fiercely for national vetoes and I simply do not understand it. We have all witnessed recently how national vetoes have dramatically been to the advantage of the few bad guys in the room. National vetoes have been used in bad faith against European interests.

They have been an instrument to pressure you against your own will when you were deciding on essential European policies together. They have made your efforts to find common ground more fragile and all of this has threatened our security. It has also allowed the misuse of the money of European citizens. And some important files became simple pawns in a cynical gambling game.

And why? Smaller Member States should not fear the end of unanimity, Europe has grown and changed. You can protect your interests through qualified majority, and you have proven that you are good at finding these majorities when needed.

Throughout this term, I have had the most respect for the Czech Presidency, the Finnish Presidency, the Portuguese Presidency. You were the ones that brought everyone around the table to talk about difficult topics and try to make progress. And you were the ones that engaged sincerely with Parliament. Do not fear the end of unanimity.

(The speaker agreed to respond to a blue-card speech)

Angel Dzhambazki (ECR), *blue-card speech*. – So you said 'bad guys' use the veto. Well recently two countries – Austria and Netherlands – stopped, vetoed Bulgaria and Romania, for 11 years now, for their own reasons: because of the economy, because of transportation, because of their economical reasons. So please tell me, are these countries bad guys, Netherlands and Austria? Please, I want to hear you.

Gwendoline Delbos-Corfield (Verts/ALE), *blue-card reply*. – No they're not because they did it with good faith. I'm serious! I'm serious! When vetoes are used when the country is not interested in the real content of the policies and it's just using it to have deals on another topic, that is very problematic. That's why I think that those that are using it in good faith are weakening their own work, and that's why I'm saying that they are good enough now to find majorities and they would not need it. They could do without it because they can find majorities.

Jaak Madison (ID). – Mr President, I think the previous speaker exactly showed how this Parliament is ridiculous and full of hypocrisy. The bad guys are all in Hungary and Poland. But if it is the Netherlands and Austria, they are good guys because they have good faith. It doesn't matter that they just blocked for 11 years the basic right to free movement. But they are good guys.

And that is the problem here in this House. Also Mr Karas announced several times how the Conference of Europe had announced that we have to progress our federalism and globalism. 800 people said, 'yeah, we would like to have an empire of EU'. It is 0.0001% of the population of the EU who said 'yeah, we like federalism'.

That's why it's a ridiculous House and I will never ever trust to give more power to the EU and I will trust more our own national parliaments. Is it in Hungary or in Estonia or in the Netherlands? I don't care. Please follow the Treaties. And by the Treaties you have very limited power in this House. You are not in the superstate where you can control everything. And that's the biggest problem with the EU.

Ангел Джамбазки (ECR). – Г-н Председател, радвам се, че започнахте да спазвате правилника, това е добре. Когато си говорим за вето на национални държави, да виждаме (между другото г-н Верхофстад, а тук е) граждани на Нидерландия да говорят срещу вето е лицемерие. Защо е лицемерие? 11 години без никакъв повод Холандия и Австрия спират България и Румъния за членство в Шенгенската зона заради икономическите си интереси и сега са седнали да ми говорят за правото на вето.

Ние разбираме какво искате вие обаче, уважаеми колеги. Да говорите вие за върховенство на закона е все едно представители на социалисти и демократи да говорят срещу корупцията, лоши неща и неверни, защото, уважаеми, за вас върховенството на закона е диктат на вашето мнозинство, което вие имате сега тук, в тази зала. И да, г-н Председател, Конференцията за бъдещето на Европа не е нищо различно от една сбирка на приятели, които са единомишленици. И да, те наистина са 0,000001% от населението на Европейския съюз. Върховенството на закона означава спазване на националните законодателства, означава защитаване на интересите на националните държави, за да не може неизбирани от никой хора да диктуват на други как да си управляват държавите и как да си управляват семействата и обществата.

(The speaker agreed to respond to two blue-card speeches)

Guy Verhofstadt (Renew), *blue-card speech*. – Mr President, I find the attitude of countries like Austria and the Netherlands, who are using their veto to block two countries who are fully fulfilling the conditions to enter Schengen, as deplorable as the attitude of a country like Hungary using their veto in that case.

The only thing that you have to do, Mr Dzhambazki, is say 'yes, I agree with you'!

Angel Dzhambazki (ECR), *blue-card reply*. – Thank you, but there was no question here. This is some kind of violation of rules here in this room. But still, there is no question. Can I answer something or just think something? I don't know. But yes, Mr Verhofstadt, the national states need their rights to defend the interests of their citizens against the bureaucratic system in Brussels.

Katalin Cseh (Renew), *blue-card speech*. – Just a very quick question to you, colleague. Do you know where Mr Verhofstadt is from?

You said that he is a Dutch citizen and he is not a Dutch citizen.

Angel Dzhambazki (ECR), *blue-card reply*. – OK, he's from Belgium. If you want to discuss geography, we can of course. But still, Mr Verhofstadt is very patient to defend Brussels, not the national states. That's why we are political opponents. But geography is geography, yes.

José Manuel Fernandes (PPE). – Senhor Presidente, Caras e Caros Colegas, Senhor Comissário e Senhor Ministro, representante do Conselho, a União Europeia precisa de verdadeiros líderes ou, na sua ausência, de bons governantes. Infelizmente, temos aqueles que usam a unanimidade para a chantagem e para outros casos, como o veto à entrada da Roménia no Espaço Schengen, por razões meramente internas, por razões populistas.

O problema não está, portanto, só na unanimidade. Até porque a unanimidade às vezes funciona e, em alguns casos, até se justifica, nomeadamente na questão dos recursos próprios e na questão dos impostos. Repare-se que para constituir o NextGenerationEU foi preciso alterar a decisão sobre os recursos próprios. Isso implicou uma dupla unanimidade, ou seja, uma unanimidade no Conselho e também nos parlamentos nacionais. E conseguiu-se essa unanimidade.

Para além de se falar na unanimidade em alguns casos, e nesses justifica-se, é preciso também acelerar os procedimentos. A rapidez é essencial. Se agora discutimos só a unanimidade, que depois passa para a maioria qualificada, não nos podemos esquecer que se há hoje um ou outro que veta, no futuro até poderemos ter mais do que dois ou três ou quatro que podem formar essa maioria qualificada. Aquilo que os cidadãos da União Europeia deviam exigir é governantes de qualidade que não adulterem as regras existentes.

Aurore Lalucq (S&D). – Monsieur le Président, chers collègues, je ne sais pas si vous connaissez ce film avec Bill Murray qui passe souvent dans cette période de Noël et qui s'appelle *Un jour sans fin* ou *Le Jour de la marmotte*, où un personnage vit et revit toujours le même jour, sans cesse, encore et encore. Je dois avouer que, quand nous avons un débat sur le veto et l'unanimité, c'est un peu ce que je ressens. J'ai l'impression qu'on va revivre à peu près le même débat, avec à peu près les mêmes conclusions et à peu près les mêmes demandes. Je me demande même parfois ce que je vais tenter de pouvoir dire de nouveau, parce que j'essaye de dire des choses nouvelles de temps en temps, et je me dis: «Mais qu'est-ce que je peux dire de nouveau?»

Malheureusement, je dois avouer qu'aujourd'hui il y a pas mal à dire, parce que le Parlement vous avait expressément demandé, cher Conseil et chère Commission, de ne pas transiger avec la question de l'état de droit et de ne pas céder au chantage du gouvernement hongrois sur la question de la taxation des multinationales. Or, que voyons-nous? Un paquet de mesures et surtout un pacte faustien.

Je me demande comment on va s'en sortir, d'ailleurs, parce que cette fois-ci, ce n'est pas du chantage vis-à-vis d'une directive sur la taxation, c'est bien plus grave, c'est sur l'aide à l'Ukraine. Voilà, c'est donc un précédent de plus. En fait, cette fois-ci, je crois que vous nous avez suffisamment entendus. C'est nous qui avons besoin de vous entendre, parce que vous avez des comptes à nous rendre.

Alin Mituța (Renew). – Domnule președinte, veto-ul Austriei împotriva aderării României la Schengen a creat o undă de șoc și de frustrare în țara mea. Un șoc pentru monumentul de nedreptate făcută și o frustrare pentru că Uniunea Europeană, în care aveau încredere, a permis așa ceva.

Unanimitatea este o reminiscență anacronică a începuturilor Uniunii care nu are cum să funcționeze în 27 de țări. Sau, mai precis, nu are cum să funcționeze în beneficiul Uniunii, ci al populiștilor și șantajiștilor. Pentru că, da, să fie clar, unanimitatea înseamnă că agenda Uniunii e ținută ostatică de cel mai puțin interesat de interesul nostru comun, așa cum am tot văzut în ultima vreme. Nu mai avem cum să tolerăm așa ceva. Unanimitatea nu e democrație. Democrația înseamnă majoritate. Haideți să modificăm tratatele pentru a elimina acest abuz al veto-ului de care Uniunea este bolnavă.

Charlie Weimers (ECR). – Mr President, every Treaty transferred more and more powers to Brussels. Every Treaty increased the number of decisions taken by QMV (qualified majority voting). National vetoes have been abolished in area after area.

Today, Member States can be steamrolled by the majority in most policy areas. Sweden recently had minimum wage, pay transparency and gender quota directives imposed on us against our will. EU centralists now have their sights set on the final areas Member States retain veto over: taxes, spending, foreign policy and enlargement, and changes to the Treaties – the rules of this club.

Here in Strasbourg, most want to abolish these last vestiges of national sovereignty, but you lack the consent of the people. Swedes don't want to transfer more power to the EU – it's one of the most unpopular policy ideas around. Swedes want to retain the right to say no to your new taxes and your new spending sprees.

Jan Olbrycht (PPE). – Panie Ministrze! Panie Komisarzu! Debata na temat weta ma oczywiście dwie strony. Z jednej strony mamy państwa, które boją się tego, że zostają przegłosowane. I to nie chodzi tylko o małe państwa, ale również chodzi o duże państwa. Z drugiej strony jest obawa przed użyciem weta jako metody szantażu. Trzeba brać pod uwagę różne punkty widzenia, ale trzeba przede wszystkim zastanowić się nad skutecznością funkcjonowania Unii Europejskiej. Skuteczność wymaga szybkości decyzji.

Jest czas, żebyśmy rozmawiali, które z polityk europejskich wymagają jednomyślności, a w których trzeba jednak zdecydować się na odejście od jednomyślności w imię sprawczości i lepszej efektywności. Przykład: wieloletnie ramy finansowe są po stronie Rady decydowane jednomyślnie. Parlament po raz kolejny jutro będzie głosował nad tekstem, w którym zwraca się do Rady o to, żeby jednomyślnie upoważniła wszystkie rządy do głosowania większością głosów po to, żeby można było przyspieszyć pewne procesy dotyczące budżetu, dotyczące zarządzania Unią. Zwracam się w związku z tym do przedstawiciela Rady właśnie o to, żeby rozważyć taką możliwość, ponieważ codzienne decyzje wymagają szybkości, sprawności, żebyśmy podejmowali je w takim momencie, kiedy jest to naprawdę potrzebne. Dlatego też prawo weta ma swoje różne strony. Zwracam uwagę na skuteczność działania Unii Europejskiej.

Juan Fernando López Aguilar (S&D). – Señor presidente, señor comisario Gentiloni, llegará un día en que la Unión Europea se atreva de una vez a hacer una unión más perfecta como soñamos los europeístas, y en que los vetos nacionales sean una antigualla y una reliquia del pasado.

La unanimidad puede tener sentido para cuestiones constitucionales y para la ampliación de la propia Unión Europea. Pero la experiencia prueba claramente que los vetos nacionales se han erigido en un freno, un obstáculo, cuando no una posibilidad de que un solo Estado miembro ejerza derechos sin obligaciones. Y el derecho consiste en impedir que pueda funcionar la maquinaria de toma de decisiones y legislativa de la Unión Europea. Y, por tanto, impedir que la Unión Europea pueda responder. Bloqueo, atasco en un tiempo vertiginoso que exige respuestas tan rápidas como eficaces.

¿Es admisible mantener indefinidamente el veto en recursos propios? ¿En las grandes cuestiones financieras? ¿En el marco financiero plurianual? ¿Es admisible que se pueda ejercer el veto para impedir el acceso a la libre circulación y al espacio Schengen a dos Estados miembros por parte de un solo Estado miembro de la Unión Europea? La respuesta es simplemente no.

Y por eso es urgente que se revise la regla del veto, que en la experiencia significa que la Unión Europea pueda quedar como un gigante, no ya de paso lento, sino congelado en el tiempo, cuando todo el mundo alrededor le está exigiendo respuestas para que la Unión Europea dé prueba de su voluntad de ser, sí, una unión más perfecta.

Ojalá nuestros ojos lo vean. Y de lo que estoy seguro es de que muchos de los corazones que palpitan en este Parlamento Europeo se alegrarán con ello.

Billy Kelleher (Renew). – Mr President, let's be clear and honest: what we are discussing here today is the abuses of national vetoes, the use of the veto in a manner that is malicious and spiteful, that does not consider the proposal on its merits, but instead uses it as a pawn in a larger political game.

This is against the spirit of the Treaties and undermines the genuine arguments for sovereignty and the purpose of unanimity voting procedures. Unanimity voting allows the voice of each Member State to be given equal weight on sensitive issues, regardless of size. These are matters that go to the very heart of sovereign states, for which there needs to be direct accountability for any decisions made.

So let's focus our efforts on finding a genuine solution to tackle the abuse of the veto and not allow this debate to slide into an attack on unanimity in every area of policy. Much of the solutions relies on the goodwill of Member States and some peer pressure amongst leaders.

But one practical solution would be to address the voting mechanism of Article 7 procedures for when Member States have breached the core values of the EU. As it stands, suspending voting rights of Member States that have breached these fundamental values requires a unanimous vote in the Council. This is akin to asking turkeys to vote for Christmas. These Member States should not be allowed to breach our core values and then use any commitments to remedy this as leverage for other votes. So we do need to address Article 7 at the very least.

Patryk Jaki (ECR). – Panie Przewodniczący! Panie Komisarzu! Potępiacie nadużywanie, jak wy to mówicie, weta narodowego, które przecież jest prawem zapisanym w traktatach. Wam po prostu przeszkadzają traktaty. Wam przeszkadza prawo. Wy chcielibyście robić wszystko tępą siłą. Takim jesteście demokratycznym ciałem. Co więcej, dzielicie weta na lepsze i na gorsze, według narodowości. Polska nie może, ale Holandia i Austria to już są lepsze weta, jak ostatnio w sprawie Schengen. Co to jest, jak nie rasizm? Dokładnie to samo, co w sprawie praworządności. Są państwa, gdzie politycy mogą wybierać sędziów, i są takie, gdzie nie mogą. Co to jest, jak nie rasizm? I do czego to prowadzi?

Wy chcecie powiedzieć, że zawsze większość ma rację? A czy większość miała rację w sprawie Nord Stream i uzależniania Europy od gazu? To większość miała wtedy rację? A czy rację miała większość wtedy, kiedy większość państw sprzedawała Rosji broń i części amunicji? To też większość wtedy miała rację? Czy jednak mniejszość? Czy jednak lepiej, żeby w takich sprawach było prawo weta? Dlatego, Szanowni Państwo, jeżeli naprawdę wam zależy na praworządności i na traktatach, to zacznijcie od tego, że zaczniecie przestrzegać te traktaty. I wtedy wszystkim będzie lepiej.

Pascal Durand (S&D). – Monsieur le Président, vous avez dit tout à l'heure – et je vous en remercie très vivement – que le principe du veto était contraire aux principes démocratiques. Vous avez eu raison de le rappeler, parce que le principe du veto vient de loin dans notre histoire. Il était souvent aux mains des monarques, qui essayaient de s'opposer au pouvoir des parlements et à l'expression de la volonté générale.

Je voudrais tout simplement me tourner vers le Conseil. Je ne vous demande pas d'être d'accord avec moi, Monsieur Bek, parce que votre fonction vous l'interdit, mais tout simplement de réfléchir à ce que nous avons appris sur la séparation des pouvoirs. Nous avons tous appris qu'on ne peut pas confondre dans les mêmes mains le législatif et l'exécutif.

Le problème que nous avons dans cette démocratie européenne en devenir, c'est que le Conseil agit à la fois en colégislateur, c'est à dire qu'il se permet de voter les lois à la majorité, et en même temps, comme un tenant de l'exécutif qui a la capacité de bloquer les votes de l'expression générale du Parlement européen.

Ce n'est pas possible. Aucune démocratie au monde ne peut fonctionner avec un pouvoir de veto entre les mains d'un État, alors que la majorité des États veulent intervenir comme colégislateurs, comme le Parlement. Soit vous êtes législateur, soit vous êtes exécutif. Si vous êtes le représentant de l'exécutif du Parlement, dans ce cas-là, vous devez respecter les votes du Parlement. Ce que je demande, et c'est vraiment la conclusion, c'est que le Conseil agisse comme un véritable législateur et vote à la majorité quand il n'est pas d'accord, comme tous les législateurs dans tous les parlements du monde.

Gilles Boyer (Renew). – Monsieur le Président, dans le pacte fondateur de l'Union européenne, les États membres ont décidé librement des domaines dans lesquels les compétences étaient transférées, quelles compétences ils partageaient et quelles compétences ils conservaient. En l'état des textes applicables, l'utilisation du droit de veto dans certains domaines est donc légitime, pour la préservation des intérêts vitaux, mais pas comme monnaie d'échange ou de prétexte. Je rappelle, comme dernier exemple, que la Hongrie avait d'abord signé l'accord de l'OCDE sur la taxation des multinationales, avant de revenir sur sa parole et de bloquer le processus durant plusieurs mois, dans un dossier très important, pour obtenir une monnaie d'échange.

Le vote à l'unanimité ou à la majorité qualifiée n'est pas une mesure technique. Cela a été rappelé avant moi. C'est une décision qui est éminemment politique et qui révèle, au fond, l'idée que nous nous faisons de l'Union européenne. Le monde change, et nous devons changer pour être au diapason. Face aux défis du monde, notre Union doit parler d'une seule voix et agir ou réagir rapidement. Nous devons renoncer à l'unanimité, qui monte les États membres les uns contre les autres, alors que nous devons faire front.

Michiel Hoogeveen (ECR). – Mr President, many here say that vetoes should disappear because they create a so-called 'gridlock' in EU decision making. May I remind you that the Member States created the EU, not the other way around? Moreover, it is only logical and legitimate that Member States are and remain in the driving seat.

The problem is not the veto. The problem is that you believe it is possible to make one-size-fits all policies for 450 million people living in 27 vastly different countries. Your problem is that Member States choose to do what is best for their people and not merely submit to an EU decree.

That problem, federalist colleagues, is called sovereignty. Mr Verhofstadt, we do not live in a new age of empires. Member States are not provinces of a European empire. They are sovereign democracies, members of an intergovernmental organisation called the EU.

Katalin Cseh (Renew). – Mr President, allowing national vetoes to block European foreign policy decisions is a security threat. Full stop. Viktor Orbán's vetoes have been a gift to the Kremlin, which has a vested interest in an EU that is divided and weak. Just remember that earlier this year a sanction package was halted because the Hungarian Government wanted Patriarch Kirill off the list. The EU looked just laughable, just like Vladimir Putin wanted.

And the question is this: whose interests do these vetoes serve? Surely not Hungary's. We are members of the EU. We are members of NATO. Our security is guaranteed by these institutions. Undermining them also undermines Hungary's security.

So let's get rid of the unanimity rule in foreign affairs. This is a dysfunctional and anti-democratic setup that makes the EU look weak and ridiculous in crucial moments of crisis. In short, shifting to qualified majority will not be easy. But the EU has demonstrated over and over again that it is capable of reform. We need this reform drive. We need it once again. And we need this Parliament for it.

Helmut Scholz, *im Namen der The Left-Fraktion*. – Herr Präsident, Herr Kommissar, Herr Minister! Oft muss ich daran denken, wie das Flüchtlingslager Moria in Flammen aufgegangen ist und deutsche konservative Politikerinnen und Politiker immer noch die Ausrede einer europäischen Lösung vorgeschoben haben, einzig und allein, um sich der nationalen Verantwortung für europäische Politik zu entziehen. Seitdem hat sich aber nichts wirklich getan. Und ohne die Abschaffung des Vetos einzelner Mitgliedstaaten wird es auch nie zu einer gemeinsamen europäischen Asylpolitik kommen, die diesen Namen verdient.

Das Gleiche gilt für Steuerfragen. Es braucht endlich mehr Zusammenarbeit, und vor allem braucht es endlich eine europäische Finanztransaktionssteuer. Ich bin deshalb selbstverständlich dafür, in noch mehr Politikbereichen mit einer qualifizierten Mehrheit im Rat abzustimmen. Generell aber bedarf es bei der Aufgabe des Einstimmigkeitsprinzips zugleich der Einführung der vollständigen legislativen Mitentscheidung des Europäischen Parlaments. Denn z. B. bei der Entsendung von Truppen aus Deutschland in einem Krisenfall muss der nationale parlamentarische Vorbehalt weiter gelten. Deshalb kann man sich nicht über die Souveränität der Mitgliedstaaten hinwegsetzen. Wir müssen uns gemeinsam auf diese Reform der Abstimmungsverhältnisse im Interesse der Handlungsfähigkeit europäischer Politik verständigen.

Spontane Wortmeldungen

Maria Grapini (S&D). – Domnule președinte, domnule comisar, stimați colegi, dacă mai trebuia demonstrat că dreptul de veto este anacronic, ne gândim la votul din 8 decembrie, când Austria, în mod abuziv, a folosit acest drept de veto. În mod abuziv pentru că nu a avut niciun argument juridic prezent în regulamentul Schengen și, iată, ține aproape 40 de milioane de oameni în afara dreptului, prevăzut în tratat, de liberă circulație a cetățenilor în spațiul Uniunii Europene. Am semnat același tratat și România, și Bulgaria. Cetățenii din țara mea și din Bulgaria au aceleași drepturi cetățenești. Cum să vorbim de libera circulație ? Cum să vorbim de competența firmelor din cele două țări când stau 48 sau chiar mai mult la graniță tirurile ? Domnule comisar, am transmis o scrisoare către Comisie. Vă mulțumesc colegilor care ați semnat și vor mai semna că mai avem un termen. Vă rog imediat să recurgeți la modificări, la demersul pentru modificarea tratatului și eliminarea abuzului prin dreptul de veto al statelor membre.

Clare Daly (The Left). – Mr President, we're here today talking about defending the European Union against abuse of national vetoes. But to be honest, I'm much more interested in talking about defending national vetoes from the European Union. There is a sustained and deliberate campaign in this Parliament to undermine the right enshrined in the treaties to veto Council decisions, the very basis of the EU.

Let me be clear: when it comes to foreign and defence policy, we should never, ever give those who dream of an imperial Europe what they want and abolish the veto. You can't talk about a union of equals with the one breath and steamroll over small states with the next. Every Member State has its own interests, its own priorities, its own concerns. Of course, it might be difficult at times to find a solution that suits everyone. Sometimes states might use the veto as leverage, that's politics.

Talking about aid to Ukraine being blocked by the veto is nonsense. If Member States wanted to give macro-assistance they could give it, just not in the name of the Union. It's time to stop this moral outrage, we're not the United States of Europe.

Mick Wallace (The Left). – Mr President, we're talking about defending the European Union against the abuse of national vetoes. If you want to defend the European Union, how about giving some power back to the people? Because with the Lisbon and Nice Treaties – which we in Ireland voted against on both occasions, but we got the wrong answer and we had to vote a second time – in those Treaties, power was taken from the people and given to the institution, and neoliberalism was enshrined in the European Union.

People talk about good actors and bad actors and the abuse of the veto. Who's going to decide who's a good actor? Who's going to decide who's the bad actor? What's going on here? When we signed up to the European Union, when we joined it, we understood that we weren't going to be corralled into being completely dominated by the others. We were going to have a say; we were going to retain our sovereignty. It's one of the reasons we joined. And listen, you are undermining the European Union by trying to make one big Union? The European Union is not a country; it's a group of countries. And stop trying to make an imperial power out of it.

(Ende der spontanen Wortmeldungen)

Paolo Gentiloni, *Member of the Commission*. – Mr President, the Commission would like to thank the European Parliament for this intense debate, which confirms the strong wish of a majority of this Parliament to move away from unanimity and to take decisions faster on some important topics in a Union with 27 Member States.

I hope that the three institutions can continue engaging with each other on this issue, to improve the way we jointly take decisions. The Commission stands ready to fully play its role in this process.

Mikuláš Bek, *President-in-Office of the Council.* – Mr President, honourable Members, Commissioner, judging from most interventions at today's debate, it is clear that the issue of unanimity in Council decision-making is a passionate topic for this Parliament, but also far from consensual. To those who spoke so fervently in favour of abolishing unanimity as the solution for the stalemate in EU decision-making, let me tell you that the reality is a lot more nuanced. I have got quite a lot of experience in that field over the last semester.

Although qualified majority voting is the rule, the EU remains an institution that favours unity, consensus and compromise over division and isolation. When the willingness to work together is present, unanimity requirements are not an issue, as many decisions taken this year in reaction to the war in Ukraine have shown. Conversely, the fact that the qualified majority voting applies to a certain policy area is not a synonym for progress. Mr Verhofstadt spoke of the asylum reform as an example of blockage and vetoes. But migration and asylum is a policy area where the Council decides by qualified majority, on asylum policy, and yet progress has been painstakingly slow, so even qualified majority does not necessarily bring speed.

Some of you have also mentioned taxation policy. Let me remind you that the Council has achieved much in recent years. Examples of these achievements are numerous in all areas of tax policy: the Anti-tax Avoidance Directive; a number of significant improvements in administrative cooperation in the field of direct and indirect taxation; and numerous amendments to the VAT Directive.

We should also not assume that it is only small or medium-sized Member States that use the veto. Big Member States do as well, as we have seen on a number of occasions in the past.

Therefore, honourable Members, allow me to conclude on a positive note. While the risk of blockage in our decision-making is a reality, one should nevertheless look at the global picture. The EU finds a way to take decisions in the great majority of files. The EU is highly present and relevant on the international scene, bringing responses and relief where it's needed and leading by example in most areas of global action. We managed to achieve all this by overcoming our national divergences. Thank you very much once again for your attention.

Der Präsident. – Die Aussprache ist geschlossen.

13. Verteidigung der Demokratie gegen Einflussnahme aus dem Ausland (Aussprache)

Der Präsident. – Als nächster Punkt der Tagesordnung folgt die Aussprache über die Anfrage zur mündlichen Beantwortung an die Kommission über die Verteidigung der Demokratie gegen Einflussnahme aus dem Ausland von Raphaël Glucksmann im Namen des Sonderausschuss zu Einflussnahme aus dem Ausland auf alle demokratischen Prozesse in der Europäischen Union, einschließlich Desinformation (INGE 2) (O-000048/2022 – B9-0032/22) (2022/2910(RSP)).

Raphaël Glucksmann, *auteur.* – Monsieur le Président, Monsieur le Commissaire, chers collègues, serons-nous capables de préserver les joyaux dont nous avons hérité? Saurons-nous puiser en nous-mêmes la force de défendre la démocratie et la construction européenne? Ou allons-nous laisser la corruption et l'indolence conduire nos cités à la ruine? La corruption, ce n'est pas simplement des valises de billets. C'est plus largement l'effacement de l'intérêt général devant les intérêts particuliers, le triomphe du confort sur la vertu, la victoire des habitudes sur le courage.

Bercées par le mythe de la fin de l'histoire, convaincues de ne plus avoir d'ennemi, certaines du caractère inéluctable de la démocratie libérale, nos élites ont trop longtemps baissé la garde. Or, quand les gardiens de la cité s'assoupissent, les corrompus vendent les clefs de la maison et les ennemis s'en emparent. Avec la commission spéciale sur les ingérences étrangères, nous sonnons l'alarme depuis plus de deux ans. Le temps est venu, aujourd'hui, de prendre notre balai collectif et de nettoyer les écuries d'Augias.

Chers collègues, en un mois et deux séances plénières, vous avez vu la matérialisation de tout ce que nous dénonçons et de tout ce que nous analysons depuis le début de nos travaux. Fin novembre, notre Parlement a été la cible de hackers russes. Maintenant, ce sont les valises de billets du Qatar. Nous devons montrer que notre scène politique n'est pas un marché sur lequel Doha, Bakou, Moscou ou Pékin peuvent venir faire leurs emplettes.

Ces hommes et ces femmes qui ont été au pouvoir dans l'Union et se sont mis au service de tyrannies étrangères sont des traîtres. Comment a-t-on pu tolérer cela? Comment a-t-on pu tolérer, par exemple, que ceux qui ont décidé de la politique énergétique allemande, si favorable à la Russie, se vendent ensuite à Gazprom? Comment a-t-on pu accepter que tant de nos chefs d'État ou de gouvernement, de nos ministres et de nos députés, venus de tous les pays et de tous les partis, voient leurs retraites payées par le régime de Poutine? Que dire de tous ces anciens responsables politiques européens qui servent aujourd'hui les intérêts chinois? Que dire de toutes ces conférences grassement rémunérées à Doha, ou de ces activités de conseil à Bakou? Il ne s'agit pas ici de morale, mais de politique. Je ne vous parle pas de grands principes, mais de souveraineté bafouée.

Monsieur le Commissaire, notre question orale a été rédigée avant le scandale qui nous ébranle, mais elle résonne terriblement avec l'actualité. Le 14 septembre dernier, à cette tribune, la présidente de la Commission a annoncé l'adoption d'un pacte de défense de la démocratie. L'objectif, a-t-elle dit, est de mettre en lumière l'influence étrangère et les financements obscurs. Je continue à citer M[me] von der Leyen: «Nous ne laisserons pas les chevaux de Troie des autocraties attaquer nos démocraties de l'intérieur.» C'est le cœur du sujet. Les chevaux de Troie européens des autocraties doivent être mis hors d'état de nuire.

Nous voulons donc en savoir plus sur le contenu de cette initiative et sa chronologie. Dans la guerre hybride qui est menée contre l'Union européenne, comment ce pacte nous permettra-t-il de disposer d'armes efficaces pour protéger nos démocraties contre toutes les formes d'ingérence étrangère, depuis les financements d'activités politiques jusqu'aux campagnes de manipulation de l'information ou aux investissements hostiles dans nos secteurs stratégiques?

Dans son discours, la Présidente de la Commission a promis solennellement d'éradiquer la corruption à l'intérieur de l'Union. Comment le renforcement annoncé des règles anticorruption sera-t-il lié à ce pacte de défense de la démocratie? Les nouvelles règles promises prendront-elles en compte le cas de tous ces dirigeants européens partis servir les intérêts de puissances étrangères?

Comme vous le savez, le 16 septembre 2021, ce Parlement a adopté une résolution appelant à la création d'un organisme européen indépendant chargé des questions d'éthique. Qu'en est-il de cette demande? Le temps presse.

Nous le savons tous: dans la lutte contre la corruption et les ingérences étrangères, nous n'avons pas le droit à la faiblesse ou à la tergiversation. Chaque mesure audacieuse trouvera donc ici un appui déterminé. Chaque rupture avec l'indolence passée ou présente trouvera un soutien fervent. Ensemble, nous devons montrer que la démocratie, lorsqu'elle se réveille et cesse de dormir, est belle et puissante.

Johannes Hahn, *Member of the Commission*. – Mr President, honourable Members, thank you first for the oral question on a matter whose urgency is emphasised by the recent events and developments. You have already held a debate on suspicions of corruption from Qatar and the need for transparency and accountability in the European institutions yesterday.

In answering your questions of the documents shared with us earlier this year, I will present to you some elements of the upcoming Defence of Democracy package which the Commission President announced, and it was referred to already, but also in this very room, in this year's State of the Union address. The Defence of Democracy package is scheduled for adoption in the second quarter of 2023 and the following elements are currently considered.

First, a legislative proposal to protect our democracies from third-country entities exercising activities in the Union that may impact public opinion and the democratic sphere. Second, a review of actions under the European democracy action plan. Third, measures on secure and resilient elections, including, among others, cybersecurity measures in electoral processes. Fourth, the Commission is in the process of gathering additional information to refine the scope of the measures to be included in the package. The Commission is gathering information with the study, is organising consultations with relevant stakeholders and we are following carefully the work of the INGE II Committee.

The new measures will tie in with numerous existing initiatives such as the Digital Service Act and the revised code of practice on disinformation, as well as initiatives which still need to be adopted by the co-legislators, such as the proposal on the transparency and targeting of political advertising, on strategic lawsuits against public participation and the recast of the regulation on the statute and funding of European political parties and foundations and the Media Freedom Act. In this regard, the Commission would also like to call on the support of the European Parliament to finalise the legislative procedure for the adoption of these proposals.

The European External Action Service, in close cooperation with the European Commission, has continued its work on foreign information manipulation and interference and disinformation, which has been considerably strengthened through the European democracy action plan and the Strategic Compass, as well as other initiatives such as the revised code of practice on disinformation or the European Digital Media Observatory.

Now coming to the question of protection of critical infrastructure, there's a separate framework and work stream dealing with this matter of security of critical infrastructure, and the Council discussed this only recently. With regard to election-related infrastructure, the Commission stated in the European democracy action plan that marking electoral processes or aspects of their administration as critical infrastructure could render more effective efforts to address specific threats.

The Commission considers that cooperation among Member States to ensure resilient electoral processes is essential, and we will continue to use the European cooperation network on elections to deliver on its commitments on election-related matters. Specific measures at EU level will be taken to protect election infrastructures against cyberattacks, such as the update of the compendium on cybersecurity of election technology and practical exercises to explore risks and preparedness.

The honourable Members also ask whether the new measures will tackle the issue of former European officials working for hostile foreign entities. On this topic, the package that aims to provide more transparency regarding covert foreign influence will build on a solid framework of rules on the specific issue of former European officials. There are a number of provisions in place which regulate already the activities of former staff, such as the Staff Regulations and more detailed administrative provisions for the staff of each institution.

As confirmed by a recent audit from the European Court of Auditors and the inquiry of the European Ombudsman on the 'revolving doors' phenomenon, the Commission has a robust ethical framework in place. With regard to members of other EU institutions, the Court of Auditors, the Court of Justice and the European Central Bank have adopted rules on post-mandate activities applicable to their former members.

For officials in place, the Commission would like to refer to its existing regulations, which provide for basic requirements for recruitment and obligation for officials to conduct themselves solely with the interests of the Union in mind. Any signs of conflict of interest or activities are reported and duly followed up at the appropriate level. Staff members are also obliged to follow a course of ethics, which alerts staff members to potential risks, especially in certain directorates-general which are more exposed to links with third countries.

As Commissioner Johansson mentioned at this place yesterday, we must criminalise all forms of corruption in all Member States. That is why next year we will propose a new law that will impose tougher penalties for bribery, trafficking and influence, embezzlement and abuse of power.

Regarding the issue on the extent to which the package includes a whole-of-society approach, we have taken this approach already in the European democracy action plan. All sectors need to be involved and accountable: public authorities and politicians, media and civil society, industry and also online platforms. Civil society in particular will benefit from the elements of the package in several ways by supporting the development of tools to address covert influence through funding by third countries. We will help civil society to better understand where different actors are coming from. As part of the review of the European democracy action plan, the Commission will also look at actions which involve civil society, including by developing civic space and citizens' participation to bolster democratic resilience from within.

Regarding funding itself, the Commission is currently providing a number of funds to civil society, researchers and practitioners. For instance, under Horizon Europe or citizenship equality rights in various programmes.

Finally, I would like to address the question inquiring whether the Commission will use the INGE report as the basis for drafting the Defence of Democracy package. I would like to thank the honourable Members and the special committee, as well as the rapporteur, Ms Kalniete, for this very broad and exhaustive document. We have carefully read the report and followed with a written reply on 30 August 2022. I hope that the detail in the reply shows how we found the report to be very rich and stimulating. We are following and actively participating in the works of the INGE II committee. These fruitful exchanges, the report and all related documents will help us to the development of the Defence of Democracy package and help identify the most relevant issues that need to be addressed. In particular, the issue of defence of the EU democratic sphere from covert foreign influence.

Vladimír Bilčík, *za skupinu PPE*. – Všetkým je nám zrejmé, akú dôležitú prácu sme začali pred niekoľkými rokmi v osobitnom výbore pre zahraničné zasahovanie do demokratických procesov vrátane dezinformácií. Chamtivosť niekoľkých našich kolegýň a kolegov doslova v priamom prenose ukazuje, že demokracia a demokratické rozhodovanie je úsilím, ktoré nikdy nekončí. Prestávka v demokracii neexistuje. Čelíme útokom na demokraciu zvnútra i zvonku. Nestojím tu však preto, aby sme si zúfali. Stojím tu preto, aby sme podčiarkli, že boj za čisté, spravodlivé, demokratické rozhodovanie je jediná cesta, aj keď sa na nej niekedy objavia prekážky. Prekážky však budeme riešiť ako Európania, postavíme sa im čelom a spoločne nájdeme spôsob, ako lepšie vzdorovať hrozbám. V tomto Parlamente ukazujeme, že vieme a chceme bojovať proti nekalým vplyvom. Dovoľte mi však povedať to, čo považujem za najdôležitejšie. Kam má skutočne smerovať naša pozornosť? Nebojím sa, že by si Európsky parlament neporadil s korupciou. Nič z toho, čo riešime v týchto dňoch, však neznesie porovnanie s tým, čo zažívajú statoční obyvatelia Ukrajiny už takmer rok. Absolútne nič. Pamätajme, že ruská agresia nesmeruje len voči Ukrajine. Mieri voči našim obyvateľom, obyvateľom nášho blízkeho susedstva, ale aj proti nášmu Parlamentu. Chcem preto vyzvať Európsku komisiu, pán komisár, k čo najrýchlejšom postupu pri príprave opatrení na posilnenie našej demokratickej odolnosti. Autokratické zahraničné zasahovanie sa neobjavilo v našej práci včera. Nerobme si nádeje, že zmizne. Naopak, bude čím ďalej premyslenejšie, perfídnejšie a nebezpečnejšie. Európske inštitúcie a naši občania musia byť na túto realitu pripravení.

Andreas Schieder, *im Namen der S&D-Fraktion*. – Herr Präsident, Herr Kommissar, liebe Kolleginnen und Kollegen! Die Ereignisse der letzten Tage, des letzten Wochenendes lassen uns alle fassungslos zurück. Auch ich habe, obwohl schon seit 25 Jahren in gesetzgebenden Körperschaften auf den verschiedenen Ebenen aktiv, noch nie so etwas erlebt. Aber es macht gleichzeitig auch so eindrucksvoll und traurig klar, dass wir ein *Defense of Democracy Package* ganz dringend brauchen.

Institutionen werden angegriffen, von innen und von außen. Ich erinnere nur an den Hackerangriff nach der Russland-Entschließung der letzten Plenarwoche. Der Korruptionsskandal, die russischen Angriffe und andere folgen alle einem klaren und eindeutigen Ziel, nämlich der Destabilisierung von Europa, dem Angriff auf eine freie, offene und lebendige Demokratie.

Die vorgeschlagenen Regulierungen der Kommission alleine zu politischer Werbung, zur Parteienfinanzierung, zur Ausweitung der Wahlrechte sind gut. Aber wir müssen gerade den aktuellen Anlass noch einmal reflektieren, ob wir weit genug gehen oder ob wir nicht noch mehr brauchen, nämlich ein besseres Verständnis der Auswirkungen von sogenannter *covert financing*, also verdeckter Finanzierung, und ihren Auswirkungen auf politische Aktivitäten und darauf, wie autoritäre Staaten versuchen, sich hier in Europa einzukaufen.

Der INGE-Ausschuss – wie schon erwähnt – hat ja die Vorgänge untersucht und auch bereits mehrmals im Bericht festgehalten: Es muss illegal sein, sich an verdeckten Aktivitäten zu beteiligen, die von ausländischen Akteuren finanziert werden und darauf abzielen, den Prozess der europäischen und nationalen Politik zu beeinflussen. Dafür müssen wir die Schlupflöcher in unserem Regelungswerk gerade jetzt wieder schließen, überprüfen und demokratie- und angriffssicher machen. Daher ist jetzt auch die Zeit, die aktuellen Ereignisse als Befreiungsschlag zu erkennen und als Chance, unsere Demokratie und unsere Regeln sauber, transparent und angriffsfest zu gestalten.

Nathalie Loiseau, *au nom du groupe Renew*. – Monsieur le Président, Monsieur le Commissaire, cette maison est prise dans le vent mauvais du Qatargate, mais il n'y a pas que cela. Depuis des années, nous subissons avec consternation des discours prorusses à l'extrême droite et à l'extrême gauche de cet hémicycle. Depuis le 24 février, ces discours se parent d'un pseudo-pacifisme, qui ne fait qu'aider l'agresseur et réclamer la capitulation de l'agressé.

Cependant, l'ingérence russe n'est pas la seule à laquelle notre maison est exposée. Depuis le début de mon mandat, j'ai découvert avec stupéfaction l'entrisme d'associations islamistes proches du Golfe et de la Turquie, mais aussi d'évangélistes américains, hostiles les uns comme les autres aux droits des femmes, et qui sont pourtant reçus en grande pompe dans ce bâtiment. Le constat est sans appel: des intérêts étrangers essaient de nous manipuler et, depuis quelques jours, nous savons qu'ils sont parfois prêts à y mettre le prix.

C'est donc à balayer devant notre porte que je nous invite, ainsi qu'à faire toute la lumière sur tous les manipulateurs et tous les manipulés. Interrogeons-nous: ceux qui décrivent le Qatar comme un phare des droits de l'homme, ceux qui refusent de voir que la Russie soutient le terrorisme, ont-ils seulement des convictions, ou bien surtout des comptes en banque? Nous devons agir pour trouver la réponse à cette question, agir et non plus subir, enquêter et non plus seulement dénoncer. C'est une guerre qui est menée contre nos démocraties pour les influencer et les affaiblir. Dans cette guerre, nous devons apprendre à rendre coup pour coup, quel que soit l'auteur et quel que soit l'instrument des manipulations qui nous visent.

Face à la désinformation, il est plus que temps d'agir et plus seulement de déplorer le mal que l'on nous fait. Il est temps que l'Union européenne se dote d'une communication stratégique digne de ce nom. Face au pouvoir exorbitant des réseaux sociaux – si Twitter, par exemple, devient l'égout à ciel ouvert de la haine et des fausses nouvelles –, ne tremblons pas et faisons appliquer nos règles. Apprenons à nous faire respecter. Nous avons été des rentiers de la démocratie et de l'état de droit. Il est temps que nous en devenions les guerriers.

Markéta Gregorová, *on behalf of the Verts/ALE Group*. – Mr President, dear colleagues, Commissioner, foreign interference in all democratic processes, including disinformation. That is what our name INGE (Special Committee on Foreign Interference in all Democratic Processes in the European Union, including Disinformation) stands for. Now Europe shakes in its core due to these issues.

The Chinese police stations in our Member States are yet to become a huge scandal. We have among us people corrupted by hostile foreign powers. Attacks on our infrastructure are increasing, not that any of this is surprising. It would be surprising if authoritarian, non-democratic regimes did not try to exploit our openness. What is quite terrifying, though, is that, especially at the outset of the European elections, there is still not enough action against foreign interference, against disinformation.

I hoped that, when disinformation during COVID killed people, there would finally be a legislative proposal. I hoped that, when Russia attacked Ukraine, we would be eager to strengthen our resilience. I still hope now that, when so much foreign influence emerges, we will see a strong plan – no package, no codes without obligations. No offence to those activities.

I would like to hear where the problem is. Is it the Commission? Is it some Member States, digital corporations, lobbyists? What exactly needs to happen so that there is some enforceable, clear measure that will make it urgent for you, if dead people, politicians in prison and cyber-attacks are not enough?

Anna Bonfrisco, *a nome del gruppo ID*. – Signor Presidente, onorevoli colleghi, grazie per i contributi che ho potuto ascoltare con attenzione, ma le domande di questa sessione di interrogazioni orali di oggi potrebbero essere poste da tutti i cittadini europei dopo i fatti del *Qatargate*.

Essi sono una dura sentenza della storia, della democrazia e della nostra libertà. Abbiamo scoperto, quindi, che non solo la Cina, per esempio attraverso le stazioni di polizia cinese infiltrate sul nostro territorio, non solo la Russia, attraverso la disinformazione, mirano a indebolire la nostra libertà e a violare la nostra sovranità.

Per questo motivo aveva senz'altro ragione l'Alto rappresentante Borrell, caro Commissario, nella sua metafora sulla giungla e il giardino; il giardino, quello che noi dobbiamo difendere.

Pertanto un nostro approccio diverso rispetto a quell'ambiente difficile e turbolento nel quale viviamo oggi è necessario. È questo il messaggio lapidario che l'Unione europea e i suoi Stati membri devono diffondere ai cittadini europei per dare loro sicurezza sulla tenuta della nostra democrazia, perché la realtà è che questa nostra democrazia viene messa in discussione dalle azioni malevole di Stati terzi che mirano a indebolire le fondamenta dell'Unione europea.

E siamo coscienti del pericolo che corre lo svolgimento corretto e libero delle prossime elezioni europee, ad esempio, ma è semplice quello che ci resta da fare.

Dobbiamo fare passi avanti significativi rispetto ai nostri avversari in ogni campo della conoscenza e del sapere e cercare di mantenere un ampio vantaggio competitivo, il più a lungo possibile; dobbiamo proteggere i nostri talenti scientifici e le nostre società; dobbiamo affermare con forza che non c'è alternativa all'ordine internazionale e alle regole europee.

Ангел Джамбазки, *от името на групата ECR*. – Г-н Председател, разкритията и подозренията за корупция в редиците на социалистите и демократите са огромен позор и петно върху Европейския парламент. Оказа се, както винаги, вярна поговорката на мъдрия български народ „Крадецът вика дръжте крадеца“. Разбира се, тази корупция трябва да бъде разследвана докрай. Трябва да бъдат разследвани тези синдикални, неправителствени организации, които вероятно влияеха върху Европейския парламент, за да бъде приет лобисткият пакет „Мобилност“, който крадеше бизнес от източните държави.

Всички вие добре знаете, че Кремъл и Белград влияят на Балканите през собствените си НПО-та и оттам следва в Скопие, в Босна и Херцеговина, в Черна гора, в Албания и в Косово антиевропейска, антибългарска пропаганда. Трябва да бъде разследвано тези НПО-та канили ли са европейски представители, т.е. евродепутати, както обичат да се наричат някои колеги, кои са тези европейски депутати, били ли са платени техните участия като институти, като IFIMES например?

Това са важни въпроси, защото ако Катар може да дава пари насам, и Кремъл, и Белград рушат европейското единство през Белград, в Скопие и затова много хубаво трябва да се погледне дали няма колеги, които са се изкушили да бръкнат в медеца и там. И те трябва да бъдат показани, следвани и разследвани, защото корупцията е лошо нещо, не забравяйте от лявата страна на залата, от левицата.

Clare Daly, *on behalf of The Left Group*. – Mr President, we tried to include in this question an explanation on how fundamental rights would be safeguarded in the Commission's disinformation package, particularly in light of the zeal for using sanctions against organisations and individuals accused of disinformation.

Sanctions are tools of international law, not domestic law. Fundamental rights protections in our legal system don't apply in international law. Sanctions are imposed by governments, not courts. So the burden of proof and the standard of evidence are lower. Sanctioned individuals don't have the right to hear or challenge the accusations against them.

Surely to any democrat the proposal to use sanctions to tackle disinformation has to be seen as an end run around due process and undermining the rights of the accused. It threatens to do serious harm to the rule of law and freedom of expression, the very cores of democracy. It will inevitably lead to a deprivation of rights, as the UN counter-terrorism sanctions regime has done also. So I would ask the Commission: what steps is it taking to safeguard fundamental rights?

Laura Ferrara (NI). – Signor Presidente, onorevoli colleghi, i gravi sospetti di corruzione dal Qatar riguardanti membri e assistenti del Parlamento europeo hanno reso ulteriormente evidente la vulnerabilità delle istituzioni europee alle ingerenze straniere.

Abbiamo un urgente bisogno di contromisure in grado di proteggere la nostra democrazia da interferenze esterne. La concessione di denaro e *benefits* provenienti da attori stranieri sono una pratica diffusa per comprare la benevolenza di singoli soggetti, di gruppi o di intere forze politiche e per interferire nei processi democratici e decisionali.

Come Movimento 5 Stelle abbiamo sempre denunciato i fenomeni di *élite capture* e cooptazione da parte di entità straniere che reclutano chi ha o ha avuto cariche politiche e ruoli istituzionali apicali, col fine di trarne vantaggio a discapito degli interessi dei cittadini dell'UE e degli Stati membri.

La Commissione europea presenti allora al più presto un pacchetto di proposte seguendo le raccomandazioni della relazione finale della commissione INGE; consideri prioritario uno specifico regime sanzionatorio e dei nuovi reati come l'ingerenza straniera dolosa per prevenire e contrastare le interferenze dei paesi terzi.

Lukas Mandl (PPE). – Herr Präsident, Herr Kommissar, liebe Kolleginnen und Kollegen, meine Damen und Herren! Ich danke Kommissar Johannes Hahn für die klaren Worte, mit denen er diese Debatte eingeleitet hat. Kein Jahr vor diesem Jahr hat deutlicher gezeigt, wie gefährlich Desinformation sein kann und wie angreifbar eine entwickelte Zivilisation wie unsere ist, wenn von außen Desinformation in unsere Gesellschaft hineingetragen wird.

Wir müssen auch bekennen: Keine Woche hat so sehr gezeigt wie diese Woche, dass gerade auch das politische System eine Angriffsfläche für die ausländische Einflussnahme, für Desinformation, für die Destabilisierung unserer Gesellschaften, ja sogar für die Infragestellung von Demokratie und Rechtsstaatlichkeit, für die Infragestellung unserer Werte ist.

Deshalb kann ich unserer Präsidentin Roberta Metsola, unserem ersten Vizepräsidenten Othmar Karas darin nur zustimmen, dass die Charakterlosigkeit, die hier zum Ausdruck gekommen ist, zurückzuweisen ist, dass es rechtliche Konsequenzen braucht, dass es politische Konsequenzen braucht, ja, und dass es selbstverständlich das braucht, was in einer Demokratie eigentlich der Maßstab ist, nämlich auch Konsequenzen in der Entscheidung der Bürgerinnen und Bürger über ihre Vertretung bei Wahlen.

Das gilt es zu transportieren: Abgeordnete müssen unbestechlich sein, und Abgeordnete müssen immer transparent sofort die Motive dafür nennen können, wofür sie eintreten. Im Wort Verantwortung steckt auch das Wort „antworten", und darauf müssen wir alle antworten können.

Christel Schaldemose (S&D). – Hr. Formand! Korruption. Indblanding i europæiske beslutningsprocesser. Folkevalgte, der ikke lever op til den tillid, vælgerne har vist dem. Ja, det er jo noget af det, vi har set i denne uge i den største skandale nogensinde her i Parlamentet. Det hører ikke til i et demokrati. Det hører ikke til i EU, og det hører selvfølgelig ikke til i dette parlament. Autokratiske regimer har alt for længe angrebet vores demokrati, men de er i gang med at opruste yderligere, blandt andet på sociale medier med desinformation og med korruption i vores parlament. Men også på andre områder. Men altså at se tasker fyldt med penge i bytte for at støtte fjendtlige magters modbydelige interesser, er så problematisk. Vi skal have gjort noget ved det. Der er mange ting, vi skal gøre.

For det første skal vi sørge for, at vi folkevalgte lever op til vælgernes tillid. Det kræver nye regler i huset, men det kræver også en forandring af vores kultur. For det andet skal vi blandt andet have gjort op med den desinformation, vi ser finde sted online, og som udelukkende har til formål at destabilisere vores samfund. Vi har med forordningen om digitale tjenester taget et stort skridt i forhold til kampen mod desinformation online, og det er rigtig godt, men jeg tror, at der skal mere til. Vi skal have sat hårdt ind over for både de magter, der udefra forsøger at ødelægge vores demokrati og de folkevalgte, der indefra gennem korruption også forsøger at ødelægge vores demokrati. Vores demokrati er under angreb, og det kræver, at vi tager en lang række initiativer, ikke bare over for desinformation, men også i forhold til cybersikkerhed osv. Der er stadigvæk rigtig lang vej, men vi bliver nødt til at gøre det. Der er kun en måde, vi kan sikre vores egne interesser på, og det er, at vi har et ordentligt demokrati.

PRESIDÊNCIA: PEDRO SILVA PEREIRA

Vice-Presidente

Bart Groothuis (Renew). – Mr President, whatever significant progress we make as humanity, our human nature will not change. So for those who say the problem with foreign interference is the poor, bad, moral or ethical judgment of some individuals, I advise them to re-read the Book of Genesis. It was mankind eating the apple, and mankind will continue to be tempted. The real problem is, of course, that a permissive security environment exists in Brussels and in Strasbourg, where our adversaries operate in the heart of our democracy in order to interfere with it.

Until recently, we had a China friendship group with a secretary-general from China who acted, paid by this House, and was authorised to work here. Similar groups exist for Qatar and other states. Russian interns walked the floors of this House. We still allow MEPs to travel to third countries, irrespective of who pays the bills. Our IT systems are vulnerable for espionage, and therefore external pressure on Members. Our security organisation is under-equipped, Commissioner, and hardly staffed to the level we need.

Yes, justice must have its way with individuals and corrupt individuals must be punished, but this House urgently needs to create a non-permissive counter intelligence environment so that our adversaries don't even dare to interfere with us.

Gwendoline Delbos-Corfield (Verts/ALE). – Mr President, we already knew about the terrible influence of China in our universities. A Senate report in France has clearly documented it. Chinese student spies or some officials are monitoring research to impose their narrative on the issues of the Uyghurs or Taiwan. Some researchers were even pressured by the heads of the universities to delete criticism towards the Chinese Government and to use alternative wording in certain publications or conferences.

But now we know that even worse is happening. There is proof that there is a far-reaching network of overseas Chinese police stations established in many of our Member States – in France, in Spain, in Greece. Chinese citizens who found refuge in these countries are tracked by the Chinese police and forced into returning back to China.

This is also happening in the Netherlands and Ireland, which have launched investigations, and this is happening in Hungary and Serbia. But both of these countries are denying these allegations and are not preventing this from happening.

That is how bad the level of foreign interference has become in the European Union and in neighbour countries.

Aurélia Beigneux (ID). – Monsieur le Président, pendant des années, ce Parlement s'est défoulé en toute impunité contre notre groupe politique, forçant le discours de l'ingérence étrangère sans apporter le moindre élément tangible. Les seules armes à disposition des Glucksmann et autres Loiseau ont été d'enchaîner les accusations à la limite de la diffamation, en oubliant que, si les électeurs plébiscitent notre parti depuis cinquante ans, c'est justement parce qu'il ne défend qu'une seule nation, la France.

Malheureusement pour eux, lorsque des institutions sérieuses comme la justice décident de prendre les choses en main, c'est vers votre groupe socialiste qu'elles se dirigent. Pour noyer vos responsabilités et nous inclure dans un scandale qui ne concerne que vous, vous appelez cela une attaque étrangère contre la démocratie et ce Parlement européen. En réalité, il s'agit tout simplement d'un scandale de corruption du groupe socialiste.

Je demande donc que la commission ING2, qui a préféré attaquer notre groupe à chaque réunion, sans voir la corruption qui avait lieu dans ces mêmes bureaux, d'ailleurs, soit immédiatement suspendue, que son président rende des comptes et que tous les députés qui ont porté des accusations fallacieuses balayent enfin devant leur porte.

Beata Szydło (ECR). – Szanowny Panie Przewodniczący! Szanowny Panie Komisarzu! Szanowni Państwo! Pewnie jeszcze kilka dni temu ta debata wyglądałaby zupełnie inaczej. Rozmawialibyśmy przede wszystkim o rosyjskiej ingerencji w demokratyczne systemy w naszych państwach członkowskich, w Unii Europejskiej. Ale dzisiaj nie sposób przejść do porządku dziennego nad tym, co się stało, nad aferą korupcyjną, w której główną bohaterką była wiceprzewodnicząca Parlamentu Europejskiego z grupy socjalistów. I wierzę w to głęboko i mam nadzieję, że nie skończy się tylko na rezolucjach i debatach, i tym, że sobie tutaj porozmawiamy, tylko rzeczywiście zostanie cała sprawa dogłębnie zbadana.

Parlament Europejski bardzo dużo rozmawia i lubi rozmawiać o praworządności, o ingerencji w demokrację. Bardzo chętnie zajmuje się praworządnością w krajach członkowskich, w tym atakując demokratycznie wybrane rządy, tak jak na przykład w Polsce. Być może, gdyby więcej refleksji poświęcono tutaj temu, co dzieje się w instytucjach europejskich, właśnie w Parlamencie Europejskim czy w innych instytucjach, uniknęlibyśmy tej sytuacji. Niewątpliwie ta debata musi zakończyć się konkluzjami, które będą skutecznie respektowane w instytucjach europejskich, bo zaufali nam Europejczycy. Jesteśmy winni im tego, ażeby to wszystko wyjaśnić, by więcej takie wydarzenia nie miały miejsca.

Jérôme Rivière (NI). – Monsieur le Président, alors qu'un grave scandale met au jour une ingérence étrangère par corruption au sein du Bureau du Parlement européen, la retenue et la décence ne sont décidément pas ce qui caractérise notre assemblée. Alors que la Commission s'érige en gardienne d'un ordre qui serait incritiquable, et passe son temps à réprimander les États membres qui refusent de s'aligner, ses scandaleuses ingérences dans les affaires intérieures des États membres sont passées sous silence. Dans le feuilleton sur l'état de droit en Hongrie, elle vient de confirmer la retenue financière sur les fonds de cohésion hongrois, au titre de la conditionnalité à l'état de droit. Sans mandat électif direct, sans consultation des peuples, elle définit seule le bien et pousse toujours plus loin son programme fédéraliste et destructeur des nations et des identités.

Philippe Muray, dans son essai *L'Empire du bien*, dénonçait l'instauration d'un totalitarisme doux, sucré et gentil, dont cette assemblée est le parfait exemple. Il écrivait: «Le bien grandit rapidement, bouche peu à peu toutes les issues et interdit les échappées.» La Commission, tel un axiome, brandit sa conception de l'état de droit pour imposer sa vision globale et ses conceptions économiques et sociétales. C'est de ces ingérences illégitimes, qui mettent aussi en danger le processus démocratique, que nous devrions débattre aujourd'hui.

Salvatore De Meo (PPE). – Signor Presidente, onorevoli colleghi, in questi giorni difficili la Presidente Metsola lo ha detto, «la democrazia europea è sotto attacco» e, io aggiungo, che non lo è da venerdì sera.

Sono anni che le forze straniere tentano di infilarsi nei nostri processi decisionali per influenzare o cambiare le sorti della nostra Unione e non è un caso se abbiamo istituito una commissione speciale proprio per analizzare i tentativi di queste interferenze. Lo abbiamo visto con la demagogia diffusa in occasione della Brexit, oppure con i tentativi da parte di Russia o Cina di minare i nostri valori fondamentali.

In questo scenario di rischi, non dobbiamo sottovalutare il collegamento tra le ingerenze straniere e la nostra autonomia energetica, alimentare o finanziaria: è evidente che ci sono alcuni regimi che per motivi economici o energetici, per esempio, cercano di limitare i nostri principi e la nostra democrazia.

A questi tentativi dobbiamo rispondere con strategie che portino la nostra Unione a essere sempre più autonoma per fronteggiare qualsiasi minaccia esterna che tenti di indebolirci.

Purtroppo, oggi, assistiamo a un grave caso di corruzione all'interno della nostra casa e mi auguro che i responsabili di queste condotte, se accertate, non restino impuniti ma, soprattutto, che si faccia subito chiarezza per evitare di distruggere la credibilità della nostra istituzione.

Una credibilità costruita con impegno, sacrificio e tante lotte. Una credibilità che forse fa paura a qualcuno.

E allora, in questo momento più che mai, dobbiamo reagire per difendere la credibilità delle nostre istituzioni e di tutta l'Unione europea non solo verso l'esterno, ma soprattutto verso i nostri cittadini che ci chiedono un'Europa forte, vicina e credibile.

Tonino Picula (S&D). – Mr President, dear colleagues, our identity is under attack and some wrongdoings will have serious consequences for institutions' reputations. Probably the most expected outcome of the latest corruption allegations is that the ones who profoundly threaten democracy within the EU, and from outside, will use this case as an alibi.

So far, we have been more focused on the pride of holding the torch of democracy globally. Unfortunately, we did not complete secure management of democracy internally. As some Member States and officials within the EU showed, democracy can be effectively suppressed even after it was once established.

Besides that, our immediate neighbourhood is in many cases a playground for autocratic regimes. Attacks on our democratic structures often have a foreign imprint. But for it to succeed, they are provided by internal allies. To defend our democratic standards we have to address both urgently. We need to build a resilient system that goes beyond simple codes of conduct, increase transparency regarding our meetings and introduce improved clearance of everyone working at and representing our institutions.

Immediate course of action should be to set clear rules on lobbying, as well as strong protection of the whistleblowers. To strengthen the confidence in democracy we have to lead by example.

Jordi Cañas (Renew). – Señor presidente, ¿cómo podemos defender nuestra democracia de injerencias extranjeras? Pues no permitiéndolo, no amparándolo, no legitimándolo. Porque durante demasiado tiempo hemos permitido, amparado y legitimado que Rusia e Irán, Venezuela y otros países financien e impulsen movimientos políticos extremistas en diferentes países europeos y también en esta Cámara. Porque hemos permitido, legitimado y amparado que países como Rusia apoyaran a movimientos separatistas en Europa para debilitarla y romperla, como en Cataluña —como bien sabe nuestro querido diputado Puigdemont—. Porque hemos permitido y amparado que países paguen a algunos diputados para que algunos de los temas que les conciernen no se traigan a esta Cámara o se defiendan de alguna manera. Y eso es sabido por todos.

Por lo tanto, ¿cómo defenderlo? No permitiéndolo. Y, sobre todo, no abriendo las puertas de nuestra democracia y sus instituciones a los caballos de Troya de nuestros enemigos.

Viola von Cramon-Taubadel (Verts/ALE). – Herr Präsident, Herr Kommissar, liebe Kolleginnen und Kollegen! Wir verdienen zugegebenermaßen im Europäischen Parlament nicht schlecht. Warum ist das so? Warum gewähren uns die Steuerzahlerinnen diesen relativ großzügigen Betrag? Damit wir unbestechlich sind und uns nicht mit Geldern Dritter über Wasser halten müssen.

Unbestechlichkeit ist ein hohes Gut in der Politik. Vertrauen in Politikerinnen ist die Basis für unsere Mandate, das Fundament unserer Arbeit für unsere Bürgerinnen und unsere Wählerinnen. Aber wenn die Europäerinnen hier sehen, dass ihre direkte Demokratie von außen bedroht, bestochen und beschämt wird, ist dieses Vertrauen gebrochen.

Wir sprechen hier in unserem Ausschuss schon lange über Korruption und die Versuche von Ländern wie Russland, China oder Katar, unsere demokratischen Prozesse zu beeinflussen. Erneute Versuche sollten uns eigentlich nicht überraschen. Genau dafür haben wir doch den INGE-Ausschuss ins Leben gerufen. Aber dass diese erneuten Versuche erfolgreich sind, das schockiert. Das darf nicht passieren. Wir müssen uns intern besser wappnen. Wir müssen als Institution ein Zeichen setzen. Und wir sollten meines Erachtens den Sonderausschuss INGE 2 als permanenten Ausschuss konstituieren und damit wirklich unsere Aufklärungs- und Untersuchungsarbeit auch in der nächsten Legislatur fortsetzen.

Silvia Sardone (ID). – Signor Presidente, onorevoli colleghi, per anni abbiamo assistito a prediche, a ridicole *fake news*, a lezioni di superiorità morale da sinistra sulle ingerenze straniere.

Avete creato una commissione per le ingerenze con l'unico scopo di attaccare Matteo Salvini, sul quale però non avete trovato nulla. Però non avete visto, o non avete voluto vedere, quello che accadeva a casa vostra; ora l'enorme scandalo della corruzione del Qatar svela la vostra gigantesca ipocrisia. In cambio di denaro nella sinistra italiana ed europea c'è chi avrebbe chiuso gli occhi sulla violazione dei diritti umani.

C'è inoltre un enorme problema ONG. Dagli interrogatori scopriamo che le ONG servono per far girare i soldi; è chiaro che, con la scusa dei diritti umani e del sostegno ai più deboli, si siano create strutture parallele che tradivano quegli ideali e che sono state utilizzate solo per fare soldi.

L'Europarlamento deve intervenire severamente e la sinistra deve spiegare e chiedere scusa.

Marcel de Graaff (NI). – Voorzitter, commissaris, de Twittertop verhulde de corruptie van de familie Biden vlak voor de Amerikaanse presidentsverkiezingen. Capital Research onthulde de geldstromen van de Open Society Foundations naar ngo's om verkiezingen in de EU te ondermijnen. E-mails tonen aan dat het World Economic Forum de Nederlandse regering opdroeg de WEF-agenda uit te voeren zonder dat het parlement of de kiezer hiervan wisten. Qatar kocht leden van het Europees Parlement om. Ursula von der Leyen verbergt nog steeds de communicatie met Pfizer over de miljardendeals voor de COVID-nepvaccins. Het moet verborgen blijven dat de VS achter de aanslag op de gasleidingen van Rusland naar Duitsland zat. De burgers betalen de prijs voor deze oorlog en corruptie, en dus moeten de burgers de leugens blijven geloven.

De Europese Commissie en het Europees Parlement stoppen hun leugens, verkiezingsfraude, omkoperij en corruptie in de doofpot en maken zich hard voor censuur op social media. Al deze lieden moeten gearresteerd en veroordeeld worden.

Željana Zovko (PPE). – Mr President, dear Commissioner, I had a speech prepared but I was shocked with the speeches here. I think it was Churchill who said that if you don't want to solve a problem, you create a commission – and we have a huge problem here and a new commission will not resolve this problem, which is the problem of democracy and the truth.

The Foreign Affairs Committee has all these sub-committees that are dealing with the truth – the DROI Committee, and we are now shocked at what is going on there. Our urgency resolutions – in two days, via civil societies, they are trying to change the order of the truth and the facts and none of us here is able to fight this I would say closed circle of friends who are still unable to face the truth.

15 years ago in Bosnia and Herzegovina, they introduced a law to stop this NGO being financed by foreign interference, and the European Union with its own democracy is not able to face the truth and see that NGOs – doubtful NGOs – that are using the names and reputation of some honourable persons are being used as laundromats and that we are being here influenced by these people.

It doesn't matter which autocracy, it is still not a democracy. So we should face the truth and finally start dealing with it, because without that we will lose our reputation and our credibility forever.

Brando Benifei (S&D). – Signor Presidente, onorevoli colleghi, la lotta alle ingerenze esterne e alla disinformazione, oggi più che mai, deve essere la priorità per questo Parlamento, evidentemente sotto attacco da attori esterni che cercano di destabilizzare le nostre istituzioni democratiche.

Dobbiamo reagire, la nostra democrazia non è in vendita.

Quanto annunciato dalla Commissione europea, un piano di difesa delle democrazie europee, è un segnale di consapevolezza che però deve essere implementato con azioni concrete e coraggiose. Non è più tempo di raccomandazioni facoltative.

Ecco, l'Unione europea però non parte da zero. Grazie al lavoro svolto dalla commissione INGE – penso in particolare, tra gli altri, al lavoro del collega Majorino e al lavoro del collega Glucksmann, che hanno identificato i punti deboli su cui dobbiamo lavorare.

Penso alla necessità dell'organismo europeo indipendente per l'etica pubblica, alla trasparenza dei rapporti con i portatori di interessi, a tutti i rischi connessi alle azioni di ogni tipo che svolgono le realtà dei paesi stranieri, in particolare dei paesi autoritari e molte questioni sono state ricordate anche negli interventi precedenti.

La credibilità dell'Europa è in gioco e anche la credibilità del Parlamento europeo, che non è assolutamente poca cosa, nell'essere difensore dei diritti umani. Questi anni, ottenendo con questo impegno anche risultati importanti, non devono essere sporcati da una vicenda e da una storia disgustosa.

Petras Auštrevičius (Renew). – Mr President, Commissioner, dear colleagues, foreign interference and attacks on our democracy's fundamentals should be treated as hybrid attacks and crimes, which must be punished accordingly. We must understand that such attempts are primarily directed against our citizens and their democratic and free choice. Therefore our response should include, among other measures, sanctions against third-country institutions, persons or entities that carry out such malign attacks.

I therefore call for EU sanctions mechanisms to be complemented by measures that give due weight to interference in the internal affairs of Member States and the Union and ensure democratic stability. We must act effectively to deter future attacks against our societies.

Alexandra Geese (Verts/ALE). – Mr President, Commissioner, colleagues, foreign influence has many faces, and one of the most shameful ones we experienced in this week in this House by people who haven't understood what it means to be Members of this House.

But the most powerful one is still social media, where Russian and Chinese actors deliberately target democracies with misleading content to influence the public opinion. And the Digital Services Act, which we approved in this House, will give us some instruments to tackle this. And social media networks should be preparing but, unfortunately, they are not.

Elon Musk just readmitted some super-spreaders of disinformation on Twitter, abolished the disinformation policy of the company on COVID and slashed the workforce by half, in particular focusing on content moderation and integrity experts. Facebook cut its workforce by 13%, and that means an increase in disinformation and a decrease in trustworthy information. And that means that almost half of Ukrainian independent local news publishers are restricted on Facebook.

So it's the brave people of Ukraine, to whom we awarded the Sakharov Prize, that is paying the price for disinformation for foreign influence two times with a hybrid war being waged against them, and with not even being able to access information on digital platforms. This is a scandal and we have to address this.

Gilles Lebreton (ID). – Monsieur le Président, chers collègues, la découverte par la justice belge d'un système de corruption organisé par le Qatar discrédite le Parlement européen. Ce «Qatargate» devrait nous inciter à prendre trois décisions.

D'abord, exiger la démission de M. Raphaël Glucksmann de la présidence de la commission d'enquête sur les ingérences étrangères. Aveuglé par ses préjugés, il m'a accusé nommément et sans preuve, à cette tribune, d'être au service de la Russie, pendant que la vraie corruption prospérait sous son nez chez ses amis socialistes.

Ensuite, enquêter sur l'étrange étourderie de l'OLAF et du Parquet européen, qui ont préféré regarder ailleurs plutôt que de se pencher sur la corruption massive par le Qatar, que la rumeur publique dénonçait depuis longtemps.

Enfin, cesser immédiatement de vouloir renforcer le Parlement européen et la Commission, dont on voit qu'ils sont les proies des lobbies les plus détestables. Faisons plutôt confiance au Conseil, seul représentant légitime des États membres au sein de l'Union.

Profitons du «Qatargate» pour redresser la barre et remplacer l'Union des groupes de pression et des puissances de l'argent par une Europe des nations.

Antoni Comín i Oliveres (NI). – Signor Presidente, onorevoli colleghi, con l'interferenza esterna contro la democrazia nell'Unione europea ci riferiamo al fatto che, da decenni, i mercati finanziari globalizzati sovvertono la volontà dei governi democratici.

Ditelo al popolo greco, che dodici anni fa ha subìto un piano di salvataggio solo per salvare alcune banche europee a costo di distruggere il loro sistema di protezione sociale e adesso è stata la Commissione che ha dovuto chiedere scusa al popolo greco.

Tuttavia capisco che oggi non è questo il dibattito, ma quello che riguarda l'interferenza dei paesi autocratici contro l'Unione europea come paradigma di libertà, democrazia e Stato di diritto. È inevitabile, in questo caso, citare il *Qatargate* e altri esempi, come la Russia di Putin e le sue pericolose amicizie con i partiti di estrema destra nell'Unione europea, che ha finanziato in modo non disinteressato.

Por cierto, basta ya de *fake news* sobre las relaciones entre Putin y el independentismo catalán. Por favor, basta ya.

Quando si parla di democrazia straniera la riflessione è ovvia: come vogliamo proteggerci da chi viola lo Stato di diritto se guardiamo dall'altra parte quando queste violazioni sono commesse nell'Unione dagli stessi Stati membri?

Non ci stancheremo di ripeterlo, la violazione dei diritti civili e politici in Spagna a causa del conflitto catalano ci lascia disarmati di fronte a tutti i Putin e a tutti gli autocrati del pianeta, vengano essi dal Golfo o da altrove.

Isabel Wiseler-Lima (PPE). – Monsieur le Président, que dire aujourd'hui sur l'ingérence étrangère mettant en danger la démocratie? Nous nous concentrons désormais – *enfin*, je dirais – sur la désinformation par des organes étrangers, sur l'influence démesurée prise par la Chine sur nos économies et nos infrastructures, et sur l'influence démesurée prise par la Russie au niveau économique et politique, avec son soutien actif à des partis ou sa prise d'influence dans des élections.

Nous devons nous protéger et détecter les failles dans notre système qui permettent ces prises de pouvoir, que je qualifierais de souterraines. Notre ouverture sur le monde, nos libertés d'expression, de la presse et bien d'autres, ces valeurs qui nous sont si chères contiennent en elles les risques qui, parfois, nous empêchent de nous protéger. Or, nous devons absolument trouver le moyen de contrer ces attaques et d'empêcher avec détermination la désinformation de circuler, tout en protégeant nos libertés. Oui, c'est bien une guerre de la désinformation qui est menée. Le but est la fragilisation de notre démocratie. Maintenir nos libertés en empêchant l'ingérence étrangère: tel est le défi.

Aujourd'hui, il faut bien évoquer la corruption, qui fait des dégâts qui, eux aussi, ébranlent la confiance dans la démocratie. Quand une puissance étrangère en use, c'est de l'ingérence étrangère. La corruption est illégale, nos lois la punissent. Nous avons confiance en la justice chez nous, là où l'état de droit est instauré.

Cristina Maestre Martín De Almagro (S&D). – Señor presidente, el Parlamento no es una burbuja impenetrable. Existen amenazas reales de quienes quieren imponerse frente al Estado de Derecho y la democracia. Sabemos que emplean fórmulas sofisticadas y otras más burdas para penetrar en las instituciones, condicionar la opinión pública, blanquear gobiernos tiranizados y alterar la voluntad de los ciudadanos en procesos democráticos.

Vivimos tiempos de conmoción y de vergüenza que tienen que hacernos reaccionar con toda la contundencia y fortaleza que requiere la situación. El peso de la ley tiene que caer siempre sobre los corruptos y los corruptores. Y este Parlamento, el más democrático del mundo, tiene que redoblar los esfuerzos para blindar la democracia. Desde la Comisión Especial sobre Injerencias Extranjeras en Todos los Procesos Democráticos de la Unión Europea se han hecho propuestas en esta dirección y se acogió con buenos ojos el anuncio por parte de Ursula von der Leyen sobre ese paquete de defensa de la democracia para protegernos frente a la injerencia extranjera encubierta.

Y la pregunta es: ¿para cuándo? ¿para cuándo esa autoridad ética independiente? ¿para cuándo la ley europea contra el tráfico de influencias y la corrupción, que se anunció ayer por parte de la señora Johansson y hoy con el comisario Hahn? La pregunta es: ¿para cuándo?

Hagamos una Unión Europea absolutamente impermeable a estos ataques de nuestra democracia, que son verdaderamente reales.

Ramona Strugariu (Renew). – Democrația europeană este fragilă și suferă. Crește extremismul, avem ingerințe externe în alegeri, dezinformare, amenințări fără precedent la adresa jurnaliștilor. Rănile democrației noastre au crescut exponențial odată cu agresiunea Rusiei împotriva Ucrainei și se adâncesc. Kremlinul seamănă propagandă împotriva valorilor europene la noi în casă și în vecinătate. La Chișinău, protestatari plătiți încearcă să schimbe alegerea pro-europeană a țării. Qatarul cumpără lideri din instituțiile europene. Ce facem, renunțăm atât de ușor ? Punem punct unui capitol din cea mai liberă și mai civilizată istorie europeană? Mai mult ca niciodată, nu. Dar pentru asta trebuie curaj. Pentru asta e nevoie de răspunsuri instituționale puternice și de oameni cu viziune. Pentru asta e nevoie de integritate. Fiecare dintre noi e la fel de responsabil. Democrația se apără cu sancționarea iliberalismului, cu educație, cu presă liberă, cu alfabeti-

zare media, cu vot informat. Democrația se apără cu o Europă unită. Dacă vrem să facem ceva și aici, și acasă, asta e de făcut.

Alice Kuhnke (Verts/ALE). – Herr talman! EU ska vara en fristad. En gemenskap där alla vi som lever här ska kunna uttrycka våra åsikter, engagera oss, vara högljudda i våra protester och kraftfulla i demonstrationer, utan åsiktsregistrering eller andra påföljder. Så är det inte idag. Inte för alla.

Vi vet att utländska agenter förföljer EU-medborgare här i EU. Ett faktum och ett förtryck som bland annat den iranska diasporan levt med i årtionden. Den islamistiska regimen i Iran vill inte enbart skrämma folket i Iran till tystnad och lydnad, utan förföljer också våra medborgare här.

EU måste sätta stopp för Irans agenter. De ska ställas inför rätta, de ska dömas och de ska utvisas. Ingen är fri förrän alla är fria.

Matteo Gazzini (ID). – Signor Presidente, onorevoli colleghi, recenti indagini svolte all'interno degli Stati europei hanno portato alla luce l'esistenza di un sistema di controllo da parte della polizia cinese, volto a monitorare i connazionali considerati dissidenti e a esercitare pressioni fino a forzarli al rientro in patria. Un'ingerenza incompatibile con gli ordinamenti dei singoli Stati, lesiva del principio di libertà e dei valori fondamentali dell'Unione europea.

Non sono da meno gli episodi di corruzione per favorire Qatar e Marocco, che hanno visto coinvolta anche l'ex vicepresidente socialdemocratica Kaili. Questa macchia per le istituzioni e per la credibilità del nostro organo democratico arriva proprio da quel gruppo politico che ha sempre avuto l'arroganza di ritenersi portatore di superiorità morale, da quelle ONG che agiscono nell'ombra, mascherandosi sotto nobili intenzioni.

Si è detto che la corruzione non ha colore politico. Non è vero! Il colore c'è ed è il rosso delle sinistre del gruppo socialista. Questo Parlamento dovrebbe iniziare a essere meno ipocrita e assumere posizioni forti, per evitare che l'Europa continui a essere considerata il parco giochi del mondo, dove ognuno può fare ciò che vuole senza pagarne le conseguenze.

Di quali strumenti pensa dunque di dotarsi l'UE, di concerto con gli Stati membri, per far rispettare quei principi democratici che da sempre millanta di proteggere?

Ivan Vilibor Sinčić (NI). – Poštovani predsjedavajući, obrana demokracije od vanjskog uplitanja je današnja tema, o njoj se puno puta raspravljalo i uvijek je bila festival licemjerja.

Služila je najviše za obračun briselskog establišmenta s neistomišljenicima unutar Parlamenta, zemalja članica, ali i van država Unije. Čim netko misli drugačije i ne misli kako bi trebalo, odmah se na njega gleda kao na nekakvog agenta. Ako izbori ili referendum ne prođu kako treba, traži se ponavljanje, od onog za lisabonske sporazume pa do drugog referenduma za Brexit. Čim bude izabrana neka vlada koja nije 100% poslušna, počinje se govoriti o vanjskim utjecajima, pa čak i o namještenim izborima. Korupcija odjednom postane tema i problem u toj zemlji.

Kritizira se odavde mađarska vlada, poljska vlada, a po novome i švedska i talijanska vlada, jer imaju neke vlastite stavove, ali nikada poslušne vlade poput hrvatske. Iz hrvatske Vlade u zadnjih šest godina morale su otići desetine ministara zbog korupcijskih skandala, a još bi toliko trebalo otići da imaju minimum savjesti i integriteta. Ali to ništa nema veze jer premijer Plenković je poslušan, diže ruku kada treba i nedaj Bože da iskoristi veto.

Vladajuća stranka u našoj zemlji pravomoćno je osuđena zločinačka organizacija odlukom Vrhovnog suda Republike Hrvatske. Žalbe na tu odluku nema, ali ni to nema veze jer je poslušna Bruxellesu. Poruka koja se šalje je sljedeća: „Nema veze ako si korumpiran, dok god si poslušan".

Tomáš Zdechovský (PPE). – Pane předsedající, pane komisaři, dámy a pánové, pokud půjdete spát v demokracii, probudíte se jednou v diktatuře. A toto heslo, které říkal vždycky můj otec, mě provází celým mým životem. My nemůžeme usnout. Je tady nějaká kauza, která se řeší, ale těch kauz může být neskutečně mnoho, pokud dovolíme, aby do našeho demokratického systému někdo vcházel bez toho, aniž bychom ho pozvali. Kolikrát jsme řešili, že v Íránu není demokracie? Kolikrát jsme kritizovali Rusko? Kolikrát upozorňujeme na lidská práva v Číně? A když si vezmeme rezoluce nebo si vezmeme i různé materiály, naše poziční dokumenty, tak kolikrát tam je kritika našich partnerů všude na světě? Já si myslím, že pokud nebudeme mít odvahu pojmenovat ty věci, že ta korupce nepřichází pouze skrze státy, ale ty státy užívají i některé neziskové organizace, které působí na půdě Evropského parlamentu, tak nikdy nebudeme schopni proti těmto způsobům ovlivňování dění nejenom v Evropě, ale i všude na světě bojovat. Já si myslím, že bychom měli spolupracovat. Měli bychom se daleko více zaměřit opravdu na původ toho, kdo nás ovlivňuje,

a měli bychom chtít tyto lidi, kteří nerespektují naši demokracii, vypudit z našich domů a z našich míst, protože to je největší ohrožení našich hodnot.

Maria-Manuel Leitão-Marques (S&D). – Senhor Presidente, ainda nos lembrarmos todos bem de escândalos em campanhas políticas como a do Brexit ou a campanha de Trump. Estiveram ligados a interferências estrangeiras, mas também a novas formas, sobretudo digitais, de fazer campanha.

Com a regulação da publicidade política na qual estamos a trabalhar aqui no Parlamento podemos, de uma só vez, ajudar a corrigir estes dois problemas. Queremos proibir o financiamento de publicidade política por parte de atores estrangeiros na União Europeia.

Queremos aumentar a transparência das campanhas, exigindo informação sobre quem paga e quanto paga pela publicidade política e criando repositórios de anúncios políticos que permitam a jornalistas, investigadores e a autoridades públicas detetar mais facilmente as interferências estrangeiras.

E queremos, por fim, restringir o direcionamento da publicidade política que, nas famosas campanhas que citei, foi usado para polarizar e radicalizar muitos eleitores, manipulando as suas emoções com informação distorcida ou até completamente falsa.

Num tempo em que a democracia está sob ataque, temos de ser corajosos no remédio. Acreditem que é o que estamos a fazer.

Γεώργιος Κύρτσος (Renew). – Κύριε Πρόεδρε, μετά την εισβολή της Ρωσίας στην Ουκρανία, απέκτησε ακόμη μεγαλύτερη σημασία η ευρωπαϊκή άμυνα κατά της ξένης διείσδυσης που έχει στόχο την αποσταθεροποίηση. Η επιθετική ξένη διείσδυση στο διαδίκτυο και την κοινή γνώμη είναι μέρος του υβριδικού πολέμου και στην περίπτωση της Ρωσίας προετοίμασε την εισβολή στην Ουκρανία. Η βαρβαρότητα του Πούτιν έχει εκμηδενίσει την αξιοπιστία του προπαγανδιστικού του μηχανισμού. Αντιμετωπίζουμε όμως προβλήματα εξαιτίας του πολέμου, τα οποία προσπαθεί να εκμεταλλευτεί η Ρωσία. Πρέπει λοιπόν να είμαστε σε εγρήγορση και να είμαστε αποτελεσματικοί στις αντιδράσεις μας.

Υπάρχουν και άλλοι που επιχειρούν τη διείσδυση στην Ευρωπαϊκή Ένωση με μεθόδους πιο προωθημένες και πιο μακροπρόθεσμες από αυτές που χρησιμοποίησε η Ρωσία. Πρέπει λοιπόν να συντονιστούμε καλύτερα σε ό,τι αφορά την επαλήθευση των πληροφοριών που δημοσιεύονται και την άμεση αντίδραση σε περίπτωση ψευδών ειδήσεων.

Bernhard Zimniok (ID). – Herr Präsident! Jedes Mal steht Russland im Fokus, wenn es um das Thema „Beeinflussung von außen“ geht. Wieso hat niemand ein Problem mit anderen Akteuren? Wieso hat niemand ein Problem mit den sogenannten Denkfabriken wie der Atlantikbrücke, in der Journalisten quasi aller deutschen Leitmedien Mitglied sind?

Hier wird Einfluss auf angeblich objektive und neutrale Medien ausgeübt. Das ist eine Schande für die Demokratie und müsste zwingend verboten werden. Oder was ist mit Erdoğan, der allein in Deutschland über 1 800 DITIB-Moscheen gebaut hat und unterhält? Hier kann er seine zentralen Botschaften in den Moscheen verkünden und damit die Gläubigen direkt steuern. Das fällt unter den Begriff „hybride Kriegsführung“.

Was ist mit Katar, das offensichtlich sogar eine Vizepräsidentin im EU-Parlament mit enormen Summen kaufen kann? Dass auch NGOs in diesen Skandal involviert sind, zeigt, dass wir auch deren Finanzierung untersuchen müssen. Eine Auslandsfinanzierung, wie bei den Klimaterroristen von „Letzte Generation“, muss verboten werden. Wer die Einflussnahme von außen beenden will, muss alle Akteure unvoreingenommen untersuchen.

Ernő Schaller-Baross (NI). – Elnök Úr! Az egyesült magyar baloldalt a magyar választási kampányban Európán kívüli érdekcsoportok finanszírozták 3 milliárd forintnak megfelelő dollár összegben. Eközben itt a Parlamentben az európai baloldalhoz tartozó politikusok – a büntetőeljárásban felmerült gyanú alapján – ugyancsak Európán kívülről kaptak pénzt azért, hogy politikai álláspontjuk Unión kívüli érdeket szolgáljon.

Miközben az európai baloldal tagjai a végletekig elkötelezettnek tüntetik fel magukat a jogállamiság és a dolgozó emberek védelmében, a korrupció elleni harcban, és Magyarországot napi rendszerességgel vádolják hazugságaikkal, úgy tűnik, hogy a valóságban álláspontjuk megvásárolható. Mindez azt mutatja, hogy a baloldal megpróbálja félrevezetni a választópolgárokat, és ideje lenne végre, hogy magukba nézzenek, erkölcsi, politikai önvizsgálatot tartsanak.

Radosław Sikorski (PPE). – Mr President, I wish to thank the Commissioner for his introduction. Foreign interference in democracies is, of course, a very broad subject. In that sense, the scandal that were dealing with is easy because taking cash from people is illegal under any rules. But I agree with my colleague Mr Auštrevičius when he says that we should not only punish those who've been corrupt, but also the corruptors. Qatar should – if it indeed was Qatar – come to regret what they've tried to do.

I also agree with my colleague Ms Geese that attacks on social media are troubling, and what's happening at Twitter is no good. We have also tolerated the activities of Russia Today or Sputnik for far too long. I have personally been targeted by the Russian Fancy Bear organisation, and Pegasus can, of course, be used not only by governments among Member States, but also by external entities.

But I think what is crucial is what Mr Groothuis said, that we need an ecosystem here that is non-permissive. Therefore I call on Roberta Metsola, who promised me when she was canvassing for votes, that we would create a dedicated unit here in the European Parliament that would be dedicated to vetting and to counter-intelligence. Let us do this before we have another crisis and another scandal on our hands.

Leszek Miller (S&D). – Panie Przewodniczący! Panie Komisarzu! Koleżanki i Koledzy! Dotychczasowe dyskusje dowodzą, że demokracja nie nadąża za rozwojem technologii, co stanowi zagrożenie dla jej niezależności. Komisja INGE identyfikuje te zagrożenia, ale sądzę, że instytucje unijne powinny znacznie przyspieszyć wprowadzanie rozwiązań legislacyjnych umożliwiających skuteczną obronę przed ingerencją obcych reżimów w procesy wyborcze, ich wyniki i w końcu w sytuację polityczną w państwach członkowskich. Sytuacja Wielkiej Brytanii jest znamiennym przykładem. Także i ostatnie, jakże dla nas bolesne, wydarzenia związane z korupcją pokazują, że wiemy, kto wziął pieniądze, ale nie wiemy, kto dał pieniądze. A przecież ta druga strona jest równie odpowiedzialna jak ta pierwsza.

W moim kraju, w Polsce, borykamy się z atakowaniem opozycji za pomocą programu Pegasus. Jest niewyjaśniony problem wycieku maili z rządowych skrzynek pełnych poufnych informacji o stanie państwa. Przy polskiej granicy toczy się otwarta wojna, ale także inna wojna toczy się w zaciszu gabinetów, w przestrzeni internetowej, na którą autorytarne reżimy wydały od 2020 r. blisko 300 mln dolarów. W tej cichej wojnie stawką jest wolność, swoboda i niezależność europejskiej demokracji. Nie ma tu miejsca na naszą porażkę. Nasze zwycięstwo jest naszym obowiązkiem.

Sandro Gozi (Renew). – Monsieur le Président, je ne sais pas si pour nous, cela sera comme les travaux d'Héraclès, auxquels Raphaël Glucksmann faisait référence. Ce qui est sûr, c'est que je suis d'accord avec lui: les ingérences et la corruption sont les cancers de nos démocraties. Le Parlement, avec le Qatargate, en fait d'ailleurs les frais aujourd'hui. Oui, cette assemblée a fait un travail énorme depuis 2019 — je pense par exemple à la législation sur les services numériques –, mais ce scandale montre que nous devons faire beaucoup plus et beaucoup mieux pour préserver l'intégrité de nos démocraties libérales face à toute forme d'ingérence, que ce soit de la Russie, de la Chine ou des pays du Golfe.

Dans l'immédiat, il est fondamental d'introduire de nouvelles mesures pour garantir la transparence de notre institution et mieux défendre nos processus démocratiques. Adopter rapidement, par exemple, le règlement sur la publicité politique irait sans doute dans ce sens. Toutefois, nous devons aussi regarder où sont vraiment nos vulnérabilités, car parfois elles se trouvent là où on ne le pense pas. Le sport, par exemple, est devenu un lieu d'ingérences, d'influence politique, de corruption et de violation du droit européen. Le Qatargate en est un exemple et, là aussi, il est temps que l'Union assume pleinement toutes ses responsabilités.

Patricia Chagnon (ID). – Monsieur le Président, chers collègues, nous sommes tous, députés européens, éclaboussés par un scandale de corruption d'une dimension inédite, avec des pratiques dignes des républiques bananières les plus minablement corrompues.

Une multitude d'enquêtes sont en cours, mais il y a aussi, rappelons-nous, des milliards d'euros d'argent public qui ont été mis pour la fabrication de vaccins. Il y a là matière également à soupçons d'influences financières de la part de lobbies pharmaceutiques. Il faut lever le doute sur les conditions dans lesquelles ont été négociés et attribués les contrats pharmaceutiques.

Mais où est l'OLAF, l'Office européen de lutte antifraude? Pourquoi ne s'est-il pas encore saisi pour enquêter sur les conditions d'achat des vaccins, alors que cela semblerait être son rôle? Pourquoi est-ce que la police belge enquête sur la corruption présumée des députés européens par le Qatar? Ces deux scandales présumés, je précise, se déroulent dans le silence assourdissant des organes de contrôle interne du Parlement. La question qui nous interroge, c'est: pourquoi?

Eugen Tomac (PPE). – . Domnule președinte, domnule comisar, nu mai e un secret pentru nimeni atunci când discutăm despre dezinformare, despre corupție, despre încercarea unor actori statali de a se implica activ în campaniile politice din Europa. Toate acestea se întâmplă de mult timp și evident că este binevenită și această dezbatere și îmbunătățirea legislației. Însă, până când nu vom crea instrumente eficiente prin care să combatem Rusia și alți actori statali care interferează în procesele noastre democratice, evident că aceste probleme vor exista. Tocmai de aceea invit Comisia să creeze un set de criterii extrem de clare prin care să impunem o linie roșie peste care să nu poată trece nimeni, astfel încât să putem apăra valorile pe care le avem, astfel încât să putem apăra democrația, astfel încât să le transmitem un mesaj foarte ferm celor care cred că Europa este slabă și poate fi expusă acestor provocări continuu. Este inadmisibil să avem partide politice care sunt finanțate de către actori statali interesați să slăbească jocul democratic în Uniunea Europeană. Este inadmisibil ca actori statali să finanțeze presă care să submineze proiectul european. Pentru toate acestea trebuie să avem răspunsuri extrem de ferme, clare și rapide.

Ivars Ijabs (Renew). – Dārgais prezidenta kungs, dārgais komisāra kungs! Mūsu šodienas debates notiek vienlaikus ar Beļģijas tiesas sēdi un tajā lemj par apsūdzību mūsu kolēģiem, kuri tiek turēti aizdomās par līdzdalību šādā nelikumīgā ietekmēšanā no ārvalstīm. Tas viss liecina, ka demokrātijām ir jābūt ar zobiem. Un es domāju, ka Temīdas zobens joprojām ir svarīgākais instruments mūsu demokrātijas aizsargāšanā pret naidīgiem autoritāriem režīmiem kā Krievija, kā Irāna. Un šis nav jautājums tikai par noziegumu atklāšanu un sodīšanu, bet arī par nelikumīgas ietekmes novēršanu un atturēšanu no tās.

Mums nāksies atjaunināt Eiropas Savienības dalībvalstu likumus, lai varētu efektīvi atklāt, krimināltiesiski vajāt un sodīt nelikumīgas iejaukšanās īstenotājus. Bet mums Eiropas Parlamentā un citās Eiropas institūcijās ir jāsāk pašiem ar sevi.

Mums nāksies pārskatīt Parlamenta personāla procedūras, it īpaši pirms pieņemšanas darbā, lai novērstu šādu ārvalstu iefiltrēšanos mūsu likumdevējā. Otrām kārtām, mums ir nekavējoties jāpaplašina lobistu reģistra tvērums, iekļaujot tajā arī kontaktus ar ārvalstu pārstāvjiem. Un trešām kārtām, mums ir nepieciešama neatkarīga ētikas komisija, kas noskaidrotu, kā ārvalstu ietekme varēja tik nekaunīgi ietekmēt mūsu parlamenta darbu, šādi novēršot apkaunojumu atkārtošanos nākotnē.

Λουκάς Φουρλάς (PPE). – Κύριε Πρόεδρε, κύριε Επίτροπε, μιλάμε για παρεμβάσεις και είμαι από τους ανθρώπους που δεν μασάω τα λόγια μου. Νιώθω ντροπή και θυμό με όσα έχουν έρθει στο φως τις τελευταίες ημέρες. Οι καταγγελίες για εξυπηρέτηση συμφερόντων ξένων δυνάμεων που καμία σχέση δεν έχουν με τις ευρωπαϊκές αρχές και αξίες, είναι άκρως ανησυχητικές και προσβλητικές. Η αξιοπιστία των θεσμών έχει πληγεί σε τεράστιο βαθμό και αυτό είναι ξεκάθαρο. Οφείλουμε να κινηθούμε άμεσα και αποτελεσματικά. Είναι πολιτική και ηθική μας υποχρέωση να ξεμπερδέψουμε μια και καλή με τους Δούρειους ίππους που προσπαθούν με κάθε βρώμικο τρόπο να εισβάλουν στην Ευρωπαϊκή Ένωση και να την αμαυρώσουν. Ο στόχος τους είναι ένας: η προώθηση των συμφερόντων τους με κάθε μέσο και με κάθε κόστος. Λοιπόν, δεν θα τους περάσει. Το μήνυμα όμως πρέπει να είναι ένα και να είναι ηχηρό. Απευθύνεται προς όλους. Το Ευρωπαϊκό Κοινοβούλιο είναι ενωμένο απέναντι σε κάθε μορφή παρέμβασης, εξαγοράς και δωροδοκίας. Η Ευρωπαϊκή Ένωση δεν είναι για πούλημα, δεν είναι για ξεπούλημα.

Barry Andrews (Renew). – Mr President, Commissioner, I just wish to make one point. Freedom House has pointed out that democracy has been in decline across the world for the last 17 years consecutively. And it doesn't happen dramatically, like we saw last Friday; it happens incrementally.

We've seen over the last month – it's easy to forget – we had a sophisticated cyberattack on this Parliament just last month. It's easy to forget that. It's easy to forget about Predator and Pegasus spyware and how that's attacking journalists and MEPs. And the only way we know about these things is because of investigative work being done by journalists.

And we had a European Court of Justice ruling earlier this month which undermined the registers of beneficial owners of companies, the very tool that journalists are using to shine a light into the dark corners of the corporate world in Europe. Even in my own country, in my own Member State, we have a Russian Embassy which is widely recognised as a listening post for the entirety of Europe. There are 28 registered diplomats in the Russian Embassy in Dublin for a tiny country, almost the exact same as in the UK.

So we have to stop being naive about this. We have to stop allowing a permissive environment for foreign interference in our democracy. If it's worth having, it's worth defending.

Liudas Mažylis (PPE). – Dėkoju, Pirmininke. Trečiųjų šalių kišimasis į Europos demokratinius procesus yra akivaizdus ir pakankamai rezultatyvus. Tematinės erdvės, kuriose užsienio šalys neteisėtai siekia paveikti Europą, yra plačios ir dar plečiasi nuo dezinformacijos skleidimo Kovid-19 pandemijos metu iki propagandos ir faktų iškraipymo dėl Rusijos vykdomo karo Ukrainoje. Neabejotinas ir tiesioginis Rusijos bei kitų trečiųjų valstybių kišimasis į politines ir visuomenines kampanijas. Apie greitai pasiekiamus ir funkcionuojančius instrumentus užkardančius skleidžiamą propagandą bei neleistiną užsienio šalių kišimąsi ne kartą kalbėta. Dokumentų rinkinys, skirtas demokratijos gynimui, tebešmėkščioja ateityje. Tačiau griežtesnių priemonių reikia imtis greit. Investuoti į sąmoningumo didinimą. Šviesti visuomenę, neatidėliotinai taikyti jau egzistuojančius teisinius instrumentus, kurie ne kartą minėti. Dar tebesama veikiančių žiniasklaidos kanalų, teisinančiu Rusijos veiksmus, o juk ją paskelbėme terorizmą remiančią valstybę. Tai ir būkime nuoseklūs, atskleiskime finansavimo šaltinius ir uždarykite tuos kanalus. Ir dėl Kremliaus draugelių atsakomybės. Visi Europos Sąjungos piliečiai, dėl nelegalaus pasipelnymo tarnaujantys užsienio subjektams bei tokių subjektų finansuojami politiniai judėjimai turi būti išaiškinti, paviešinti ir sustabdyti.

Радан Кънев (PPE). – Г-н Председател, катарският скандал, който всички тези дни естествено обсъждаме, но ако се върнем назад и Брекзит, и най-вече руската агресия в Украйна, надявам се, са ни научили един много прост и очевиден урок и той е, че всяка външна намеса в отделна европейска държава засяга целия Съюз, че всеки пробив в сигурността е заплаха за всяко общество, за всеки гражданин на Европа. Че всяка политическа партия, финансирана от Кремъл, всяка пропагандна медия, всяка тролска фабрика в интернет, всеки лобистки енергиен проект, който се развива на отделна европейска територия, засяга всички нас.

Ние видяхме, че Северен поток и Турски поток направиха възможна войната в Украйна, но кой пострада? Корумпирани политици в Германия, България и Италия ли? Не, всички украински граждани, но икономически и всеки гражданин на Европейския съюз, всеки европейски бизнес от Португалия до Финландия.

Но мисля, че е време да говорим за решенията на тези много тежки проблеми. И боя се, че решенията не са толкова прости, колкото си ги представяме в този дебат, и не се свеждат до изграждането на различни тела, които да разследват етиката на отделни депутати. Това, което ни е необходимо, е разширяване и утвърждаване на мандата на Европейската прокуратура и изграждане на европейски органи за разследване, да не кажа европейски служби за сигурност. Нищо помалко от това.

Tomislav Sokol (PPE). – Poštovani predsjedavajući, povjereniče, kolegice i kolege, učestala vanjska uplitanja u demokratske procese u Europi imaju za cilj ugroziti temeljne vrijednosti i destabilizirati europsko društvo.

Jedan od najočitijih primjera predstavlja izmjena zakona o predsjedniku koji antieuropske, prosrpske i proruske snage žele iskoristiti da na protuustavan način dođe na vlast u Crnoj Gori, zemlji kandidatkinji za članstvo u EU-u. Nažalost, protivno preporukama Venecijanske komisije, glasanjem o zakonu u Skupštini Crne Gore, ova je država zapala u ustavno-pravnu krizu bez presedana. Stoga nije bilo izbora nego otkazati sjednicu Parlamentarnog odbora za stabilizaciju i pridruživanje između Europske unije i Crne Gore koja je bila zakazana za ovaj tjedan u Strasbourgu. Prostor jugoistočne Europe pod sve većim je obavještajnim, medijskim i gospodarskim utjecajem stranih autoritarnih režima, što može destabilizirati i samu Europsku uniju.

Poseban problem predstavlja politika Srbije koja uporno pokušava sjediti na dvije stolice, održavajući vojnu i gospodarsku suradnju s Rusijom te odbijajući uvesti sankcije Moskvi. Srpska proruska i hegemonistička politika, nažalost i te kako doprinosi destabilizaciji susjednih država i cijelog zapadnog Balkana.

Zato je sada za Europsku uniju važnije nego ikad aktivnije se uključiti političke procese u ovom dijelu Europe jer bi posljedice naše pasivnosti mogle biti pogubne.

Gheorghe Falcă (PPE). – Domnule președinte, domnule comisar, doamnelor și domnilor, acțiunea Rusiei împotriva democrațiilor europene nu se poate întâmpla fără sprijin din interior. Rusia finanțează politicieni, jurnaliști, ONG-uri și partide din Uniunea Europeană. Este un fapt cum lupta unora împotriva energiei nucleare, de exemplu, a avut ca efect creșterea dependenței noastre de gazul rusesc. Vocea Moscovei se face auzită constant și agresiv în interiorul Uniunii Europene. Așa a fost și la votul din JAI de săptămâna trecută, când, în pofida rezoluțiilor repetate din partea Parlamentului European, un guvern din UE a blocat aderarea României la Schengen pe baza unor minciuni care duhnesc a dezinformare rusească. Doamna comisar Johansson spunea aseară, citez: „Cu toții am pierdut prin votul de săptămâna trecută. Există un singur câștigător, iar acesta locuiește la Kremlin. Știu că decembrie este luna cadourilor, dar eu spun: fără cadouri pentru Putin". Închei citatul. Din acest motiv, solicit Comisiei să ne comunice cum va lupta împotriva celor care ajută Rusia din interiorul Uniunii Europene.

Sunčana Glavak (PPE). – Poštovani predsjedavajući, poštovani povjereniče, vidim da ste online, pazite što surfate, kolegice i kolege, namjerni pokušaji manipulacije informacijskim okruženjem i javnim diskursom od strane stranih aktera nipošto nisu nova pojava.

Rusko korištenje informacijske manipulacije i uplitanje u pripremu i izvođenje agresorskog rata protiv Ukrajine to pokazuje i pokazuje kako takva aktivnost čini sastavni dio suvremenog ratovanja. Isto kao što moderna tehnološka dostignuća mogu biti alat za jačanje naših demokracija, istodobno su kanal kojim na mala vrata građane izlažemo riziku od vanjskog uplitanja i manipulacije. S tim na umu, ne mogu dovoljno naglasiti važnost medijske pismenosti kao najsigurnijeg i najsnažnijeg štita naših građana.

Paket za obranu demokracije treba pružiti okvir kojim će se države članice voditi kako bi se potaknulo demokratsku participaciju i uključivanje građana u procese odlučivanja i izvan izbornih ciklusa. Naše demokracije ne smijemo i ne možemo uzimati zdravo za gotovo. Jedino jačanjem demokracije iznutra možemo postići otpornost na vanjska uplitanja. Konferencija o budućnosti Europe takav je primjer jačanja naše demokracije. Osposobljavanjem i podizanjem svijesti jačamo ulogu građana u komunikacijskom procesu.

Međutim, nemojmo zaboraviti, postoje novi suvremeni oblici ugroze. Oni zahtijevaju transformaciju sigurnosne politike u svakom pogledu, u medijskom, političkom i gospodarskom. Na nama je da preuzmemo tu odgovornost. Samo obrazovani i educirani građani snažni su građani Europske unije.

Catch-the-eye procedure

Mick Wallace (The Left). – Mr President, sometimes I actually feel sorry for the Commission, having to listen to MEPs, appeal to them as to what they're going to do about Russian interference in the European Union.

Now, do Russia and China interfere in matters of European affairs? Yeah, they do. Do they engage in propaganda? Yeah, they do. But you know what? Neither of them were any good at it because we could actually see through most of what they had to say and do. But do you know who is much better at it? I mean, the Americans are way ahead of them, but we don't seem to have a problem with that.

I go to meetings here – committees and delegations – and the lack of balance in the people being brought before us to give us their words of wisdom is shocking. I witness people coming in on a regular basis to promote and defend US imperialism, and there's no one brought in to question them. I've witnessed people coming in to tell us how wonderful things are in the Gulf States, and no one being brought in to question them.

Why don't we start asking who is bringing these people in? Who's deciding who comes before our committees? Who decides what people should inform us about what's really going on. This place is a bit of a joke sometimes, and my heart does go out to the Commission.

(End of catch-the-eye procedure)

Johannes Hahn, *Member of the Commission*. – Mr President, honourable Members, first of all, thank you for the conversation with us. But I would like to thank, more in generaL, all of you for today's opportunity to present the very first sketch of what we will be the Defence of Democracy package.

Your contributions will serve as a reflection of the Commission and the work of my colleague Věra Jourová, who unfortunately could not be here today. We are at the early stages of preparation of our upcoming proposals, which we aim to adopt, as already announced in my introduction, in spring 2023.

We will continue our very fruitful cooperation with the Parliament and, in particular, with the INGE 2 Committee, which will contribute to shape this package and indeed will strengthen democracy in Europe.

President. – The debate is closed.

14. Die Berichte der Kommission über die Situation von Journalisten und die Auswirkungen der Rechtsstaatlichkeit (Aussprache)

Presidente. – Segue-se o debate sobre as declarações do Conselho e da Comissão sobre os relatos da Comissão sobre a situação dos jornalistas e as implicações em matéria do Estado de direito (2022/3002(RSP)).

Mikuláš Bek, *President-in-Office of the Council*. – Mr President, Commissioner, honourable Members, media freedom is an indispensable pillar of our democratic societies, and journalists are its guardians and keepers. There is no democracy where there is no freedom of speech and where people fear for their life every time they are critical. This is the reason why freedom of expression, media freedom and pluralism are guaranteed in the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights. These freedoms must be protected by all governments. It is an absolute priority for all democracies to protect journalists from financial or political pressure. Journalists must never be threatened for simply doing their jobs.

The Council recently reaffirmed its commitment to the protection and safety of journalists in its conclusions of June 2022. It acknowledged that obstacles to freedom of expression and freedom to inform are on the rise in Europe and in the world. In addition, the Council is also working on protecting and promoting a common rule-of-law culture amongst Member States. For example, the General Affairs Council holds country-specific discussions as part of the annual rule-of-law dialogue. The one held in April covered Luxembourg, Hungary, Malta, the Netherlands and Austria, and the latest one, which took place yesterday, focused on Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovenia and Sweden. On these occasions, media freedom is regularly highlighted as a key enabler of the rule of law.

The Council is also committed to advancing work on key legislative proposals currently on the table, namely the proposed Media Freedom Act and the SLAPP Directive. The Commission proposal for a directive against strategic lawsuits against public participation aims to avoid judicial harassment, especially against journalists. Since its adoption on 27 April 2022, work in the Council has been advancing quickly. For the Council, it is crucial to find the right balance between the right to freedom of expression and the right of access to justice, and to ensure that the safeguards provided in the proposal will be adequate and efficient in protecting SLAPP targets. These crucial aspects were especially debated and highlighted last week by Justice ministers.

The Council is also actively examining the proposed Media Freedom Act, which aims to support the proper functioning of the internal market for media services. In the current geopolitical situation, where autocratic regimes try to suppress independent information and media pluralism, we must defend our democratic model and our fundamental rights. This includes the effective exercise of the freedom of expression and information. We will continue our work for those rights to thrive in the Union. Thank you very much for your attention.

Johannes Hahn, *Member of the Commission*. – Mr President, Minister, honourable Members, thank you for your proposing this statement to the agenda of this day.

Journalists continue to face threats and obstacles to their work, including physical attacks reported in Europe. Three hundred and eleven media freedom violations were recorded in the first six months of this year by the Media Freedom Rapid Response project. Verbal attacks, including harassment and threats, were the most common types of violation, followed by legal incidents and physical attacks.

While private individuals remained the main source of attacks on journalists and media workers, police and state security and government and public officials were also sometimes behind these attacks. The challenge over the last few years was to deepen our analysis of the current media environment and to better understand the influence of the digital environment on media production, distribution and consumption.

It's for all these reasons and to answer these challenges that the Commission adopted the recommendation on the safety of journalists in September 2021 and proposed an anti-strategic lawsuit against public participation, better known as the so-called 'SLAPP package', in 2022 and, finally, the Media Freedom Act in September of this year.

The recommendation provides a catalogue of practical measures that could be applied at the national level. While it does not include any legal obligations for Member States, its rationale is to propose a set of practical and operational voluntary steps that could be taken by them. In the anti-SLAPP package we tackle the use of lawsuits by abusive claimants in bad faith to silence and harass journalists and human rights defenders and not to gain access to justice.

The Commission considers that the most efficient way to fight against SLAPP and prevent it from growing roots in the Union is a solid combination of legislation by way of a proposal for a directive and a recommendation. The recommendation is designed to build awareness and expertise among the targets of lawsuits, legal professionals and other groups. It will ensure that support is available for those facing punitive legal actions and promote a more systematic monitoring of SLAPP.

The proposed directive provides for targeted civil procedural safeguards against SLAPP in cross-border situations and provides for a careful balance of fundamental rights. And, finally, the European Media Freedom Act complements this proposal. It will be an important cornerstone for safeguarding the integrity of the internal market for media services, bringing more legal certainty for providers and users of such services.

The objective of the European Media Freedom Act is also to ensure that no journalist should be spied on for doing his or her work. In the same vein, the proposed rules clarify that journalists should not be prosecuted for protecting the confidentiality of their sources. Each Member State will have to appoint an independent authority to handle complaints by journalists.

It's very commendable that some Member States have taken or stepped up existing measures to improve the safety of journalists. For example, in France, the legislation recognises the role of journalists in demonstrations. A liaison committee between the Ministry of Home Affairs and the press enables permanent dialogue on safety in demonstrations. Increased threats and physical attacks have been frequently reported, and the government has recently agreed a memorandum of understanding on the protection of journalists.

We also note that criminal trials continue in the cases of journalists murdered in the Union. In Malta, an alleged mastermind of the assassination of journalist Daphne Caruana Galizia has been indicted on charges of complicity in murder and criminal association and criminal proceedings are ongoing. In Slovakia, the trial related to the assassination of Ján Kuciak and his fiancée Martina Kusnirova is going on. In the Netherlands, the trial related to the murder of journalist Peter de Vries has started. And in Greece the murder of journalist Giorgos Karaivaz in April 2021 is under investigation.

For these reasons, we address a series of recommendations to Greece, Croatia, Slovenia and Slovakia specifically on this issue in the rule of law report of this year. We will follow them when preparing the fourth rule of law report scheduled for July next year.

Jeroen Lenaers, *namens de PPE-Fractie*. – Voorzitter, onafhankelijke en vrije media zijn cruciale pijlers van een functionerende democratie. Journalisten zijn waakhonden van onze rechtsstaat. Die moeten we koesteren en beschermen. Toch zien we in de praktijk – ook in Europa – dat journalisten het steeds moeilijker krijgen. Ik zie het in mijn eigen land. Journalisten worden bedreigd, geïntimideerd, auto's worden van de weg geduwd, brandbommen door de brievenbus gegooid en we zien zelfs verslaggevers die hun logo af moeten dekken uit angst voor geweld.

Er zijn journalisten in Europa die hun werkzaamheden met hun leven hebben moeten bekopen: Daphne Caruana Galizia, Ján Kuciak, Peter R. de Vries. Laten we aan deze namen blijven herinneren en laten we hun nalatenschap levend houden. Want de dreiging is een veelkoppig monster dat niet alleen bestaat uit criminelen.

In toenemende mate zijn het juist politici die media afschilderen als de grote vijand. Rechts-populisten en Trumpwannabe's in heel Europa hebben er een sport van gemaakt om hun achterban tegen journalisten op te zetten, met alle risico's van dien.

Daarnaast zien we in Europa dat regeringen invasieve spionagesoftware als Pegasus gebruiken om journalisten af te luisteren, terwijl we juist dankbaar moeten zijn, want zonder goede onderzoeksjournalistiek zouden we ook op dat vlak nog steeds volledig in het duister tasten.

De vele slachtoffers die we gesproken hebben, hadden stuk voor stuk diep indrukwekkende verhalen over het verwoestende effect van dat soort invasieve privacyschendingen op de uitoefening van hun vak.

Daarom is het goed dat we ons hier gezamenlijk sterk maken voor betere bescherming van journalisten. We verwelkomen de voorstellen met betrekking tot de mediawet en de anti-SLAPP-richtlijn, en we moeten deze waar mogelijk nog veel sterker maken. Als we onze rechtsstaat en onze democratie willen beschermen, dan begint dat bij de bescherming van onze journalisten.

Sylvie Guillaume, *au nom du groupe S&D*. – Monsieur le Président, Monsieur le Commissaire, mes chers collègues, la Fédération européenne des journalistes rapporte la mort de douze journalistes en Europe en 2022, dont beaucoup en Ukraine. Cent vingt-quatre journalistes sont emprisonnés.

Ces chiffres consternants sont malheureusement l'arbre qui cache la forêt, car les attaques à l'encontre des journalistes s'avèrent nombreuses et multiples (menaces en ligne et hors ligne, litiges abusifs, harcèlement judiciaire des journalistes ou utilisation de logiciels espions pour identifier les sources, pour ne citer que quelques exemples), tout particulièrement quand leur travail touche à des faits d'abus de pouvoir, de corruption, de violations des droits de l'homme ou d'activités criminelles.

Les rapports de la Commission sur l'état de droit ne s'attellent pas suffisamment à la question à mon goût. Le climat général d'insécurité pour les journalistes est extrêmement préoccupant, car ces menaces contribuent à inhiber la liberté d'expression. Elles peuvent conduire à l'autocensure. Elles sapent le journalisme comme pilier de nos démocraties et de l'état de droit. Un journalisme indépendant, pluraliste, fiable permet la distinction entre les faits et les idées, de même qu'il permet de contrer la désinformation, de révéler ce qui ne doit pas rester caché et de garantir les contre-pouvoirs.

C'est pourquoi nous devons protéger les journalistes et le journalisme face aux tendances délétères que l'on peut observer aujourd'hui. L'Union européenne peut enfin concrétiser ses ambitions en matière de politique des médias et évaluer scrupuleusement la situation du pluralisme des médias et de la transparence sur la propriété des médias en Europe.

Fabienne Keller, *au nom du groupe Renew.* – Monsieur le Président, Monsieur le Commissaire – cher Johannes Hahn –, Monsieur le Ministre représentant la Tchéquie, une démocratie, *la* démocratie, ne fonctionne pas sans ses contrepouvoirs. Les journalistes libres et indépendants en sont des acteurs essentiels. Ils informent les citoyens, ils vérifient les faits et ils combattent les *fake news*. En bref, ils sont les garants de notre liberté d'expression et d'opinion.

Pourtant, à l'heure du numérique, où le buzz prime sur l'information vérifiée, à l'heure où la presse est rachetée pour mieux contrôler nos opinions, nos journalistes ne sont pas suffisamment protégés. Le soutien aux médias libres est nécessaire dans l'ensemble des pays de l'Union européenne. La loi antibâillon est bien sûr une bonne chose, mais je veux aussi plaider ici pour des financements publics plus forts, pour pallier les prises de contrôle des médias et leur concentration.

Je voudrais aussi saluer, Monsieur le Commissaire – cher Johannes Hahn –, une décision historique, cette semaine: la suspension des 12,1 milliards d'euros de fonds européens à la Hongrie, qui ne respecte pas l'état de droit et qui ne respecte pas la liberté de la presse. En quelques années, Viktor Orbán a mené une vraie chasse aux médias libres, aujourd'hui quasiment inexistants. Voici dix-huit mois, la dernière radio indépendante, Klubrádió, a cessé d'émettre à la suite d'une suspension de licence par le régulateur d'État.

L'Europe, chers collègues, doit s'armer pour protéger nos valeurs démocratiques et notre modèle de société. Ce combat continue.

Saskia Bricmont, *au nom du groupe Verts/ALE.* – Monsieur le Président, Reporters sans frontières dénonce le sombre quotidien de nombreux journalistes en Europe: agressions physiques, lois liberticides, poursuites-bâillons, intimidations, censure, manque de pluralisme et d'indépendance, concentration des médias et surveillance. La liberté de la presse est en danger dans 22 États membres sur 27, selon la Commission européenne. Autant de menaces pour la liberté de la presse et pour son travail, qui provoquent d'insoutenables formes d'autocensure, alors que les journalistes dénoncent souvent la corruption, les violations de l'état de droit et les injustices commises par les puissants et les dirigeants européens.

Daphne Caruana Galizia à Malte, Ján Kuciak en Slovaquie, Giórgos Karaïváz en Grèce, Peter de Vries aux Pays-Bas: ces reporters d'investigation sont morts pour leur travail, assassinés sur le territoire européen. D'autres, à l'origine des révélations sur l'utilisation illégale par nos gouvernements et par nos services secrets de logiciels espions tel Pegasus, souvent à leur propre encontre, sont aujourd'hui poursuivis et intimidés dans nos États. Julian Assange, qui figurait parmi les finalistes du prix Sakharov du Parlement européen, risque actuellement 175 ans de prison aux États-Unis pour son travail de lanceur d'alerte. Où est passée la sacro-sainte liberté de la presse? Les médias, avec la justice, sont des contre-pouvoirs indispensables à nos démocraties et à nos États de droit.

Le scandale du Qatargate, qui secoue notre institution, rappelle que certains se laissent corrompre aux dépens de la démocratie et que les ingérences étrangères dans les affaires européennes visent elles aussi à amoindrir nos démocraties. Ce scandale a été révélé grâce à l'existence de contre-pouvoirs. Face à une presse de plus en plus muselée, nous ne nous tairons pas, et nous rappelons l'enseignement de Montesquieu: «Pour qu'on ne puisse abuser du pouvoir, il faut que, par la disposition des choses, le pouvoir arrête le pouvoir.»

Protégeons les journalistes, protégeons ce qu'il y a de plus cher à nos démocraties, et sanctionnons celles et ceux qui s'autorisent à espionner ces contre-pouvoirs, celles et ceux qui empêchent une presse libre et indépendante de fonctionner!

Mittwoch, 14. Dezember 2022

Nicolaus Fest, *im Namen der ID-Fraktion*. – Herr Präsident, Herr Kommissar, verehrte Kollegen! Letzte Woche war ich in der Konferenz der Präsidenten, und Kommissar Šefčovič trug dort unter anderem zu den Problemen mit Großbritannien vor. Gefühlte 50 Mal fiel der Begriff „Rahmenabkommen". Herr Kommissar Hahn, das geht an Ihre Adresse und bitte geben Sie es an Ihren Kollegen Šefčovič weiter: Unser Rahmenabkommen mit europäischen Staaten sind die Grundrechte und auch die Pressefreiheit, und danach sollten Sie endlich handeln.

Julian Assange sitzt seit drei Jahren in einem britischen Hochsicherheitsgefängnis, zusammen mit den schlimmsten Kriminellen. Aber Julian Assange ist nicht verurteilt. Es gibt noch nicht einmal einen Prozess. Wenn seine Frau und seine beiden kleinen Kinder ihn besuchen wollen, muss sie sich und die Kinder auch den entwürdigendsten Leibesvisitationen unterziehen. Herr Kommissar Hahn, haben sich Ihre Frau und Ihre Kinder schon mal vom Gefängnispersonal durchfummeln und von Hunden abschnüffeln lassen?

Assange hat das gemacht, was Medien machen müssen. Er hat publiziert, was andere Leute nicht lesen wollen. Assange ist kein Krimineller, sondern er ist Publizist und Chefredakteur. Wenn das, was mit Assange seit Jahren passiert, in Polen oder Ungarn passieren würde, wäre hier Großalarm – und zwar völlig zu Recht.

Assange ist unser Rahmenabkommen. Sein Fall ist wichtiger als Zollschranken oder Fischrechte. Deshalb setzen Sie die Freilassung von Julian Assange endlich auf Ihre Agenda. Ansonsten sollten Sie, wenn es um Journalistenrechte geht, hier auch nichts beklagen.

Assita Kanko, *namens de ECR-Fractie*. – Voorzitter, de EU is de moraalridder van de planeet, maar ook hier staat de rechtsstaat enorm onder druk. Wegens corruptie bijvoorbeeld. Daphne Caruana Galizia sneuvelde in Malta door een bom die in haar auto was geplaatst. Wegens misdaad. De Nederlandse misdaadjournalist Peter R. de Vries werd op straat doodgeschoten in Amsterdam. Wegens islamisme en te veel tolerantie voor intolerantie. De cartoonisten van Charlie Hebdo werden in één klap neergemaaid tijdens hun redactievergadering in Parijs. Steeds meer journalisten moeten onderduiken als ze een lijntje schrijven over de islam. Het begint met censuur, intimidatie en bedreigingen, en eindigt vaak met geweld of zelfs moord.

Maar de bedreiging voor onze rechtsstaat komt niet alleen van buitenaf. Ze komt ook van binnenuit en ligt bijvoorbeeld in de verleiding om niet meer na te denken, om vooringenomenheid en de *pensée unique* de overhand te laten nemen. Journalisten moeten feiten tegen het licht houden en zich nooit laten domineren door militantisme. Anders wordt het activisme en is het geen journalistiek meer. Dan gaan onze medeburgers de traditionele media steeds meer wantrouwen, zich ervan afkeren en vatbaarder worden voor desinformatie en populisme. Ook dat ondermijnt onze rechtsstaat.

Een deel van de pers moet daarom dringend zelfkritisch worden om weer aansluiting te vinden bij onze medeburgers. Geen cancelcultuur, geen wokisme, geen zelfcensuur uit angst, maar vrijheid. "De plicht om te informeren. De vrijheid om te denken." Dat was het motto van de krant van mijn mentor, onderzoeksjournalist Norbert Zongo, die bruut vermoord werd in Burkina Faso in 1998 omdat hij onderzoek deed over corruptie. Ik voel nog steeds woede en verdriet als ik eraan denk, maar ik ben ook trots op hem. Hij was in zijn eentje de vierde pijler van een democratie die lag te sterven.

Zonder vrije pers is er geen democratie. We hebben niet alleen de scheiding der machten nodig, waarvan Montesquieu sprak, maar ook de kracht van de vierde macht. Deze vierde macht: een kritische en onafhankelijke pers.

Κωνσταντίνος Αρβανίτης, *εξ ονόματος της ομάδας The Left*. – Κύριε Πρόεδρε, *(απευθυνόμενος στον Επίτροπο Johannes Hahn)* αυτό το μνημόνιο συνεργασίας δεν το κατάλαβα ακριβώς για την Ελλάδα, αν μπορείτε στη δευτερολογία σας να μας το εξηγήσετε, γιατί δεν κατάλαβα αν η Ελλάδα είναι κράτος υπό ένταξη ή είναι μέλος. Θα σας εξηγήσω γιατί το λέω αυτό. Ποια είναι τα βήματα μετασχηματισμού μιας φιλελεύθερης δημοκρατίας σε ανελεύθερη, σταδιακά απολυταρχική; Δημοσιογράφος ήμουν. Έχω απολυθεί ουκ ολίγες φορές για θέματα δημοκρατίας.

Το σκάνδαλο των παρακολουθήσεων στην Ελλάδα, το οποίο εμείς φέραμε στα όργανα του Κοινοβουλίου, ήταν η παρακολούθηση δημοσιογράφου. Το όνομά του είναι Κουκάκης, διερευνούσε την πορεία ύποπτου χρήματος. Ο κ. Κουκάκης θεωρήθηκε εθνικός κίνδυνος διότι έψαχνε δημοσιογραφικά και το θέμα της διαχείρισης των χρημάτων· από την Εθνική Υπηρεσία Πληροφοριών παρακολουθείτο, στην οποία, με δικό του νόμο, ο υπεύθυνος είναι ο Πρωθυπουργός της Ελλάδας, ο κ. Μητσοτάκης. Το έτερο θύμα, ο δημοσιογράφος κ. Μαλικούδης, διερευνούσε δημοσιογραφικά ζητήματα που άπτονται του προσφυγικού· και αυτός χαρακτηρίστηκε εθνικός κίνδυνος από την υπηρεσία της οποίας προΐσταται ο Πρωθυπουργός. Αν συνεχίσω με τα ονόματα, δεν θα μου φτάσει ο χρόνος.

Δημοσιογράφοι οι οποίοι αποκάλυψαν τη λίστα Lagarde και την υπόθεση Novartis οδηγήθηκαν στη δικαιοσύνη, λοιδορήθηκαν, χαρακτηρίστηκαν από τον πρωθυπουργό της Ελλάδας «συμμορία», ταλαιπωρήθηκαν, αθωώθηκαν. Υπάρχει στασιμότητα χωρίς καμία επίσημη πληροφόρηση. Είπατε ότι προχωρά η έρευνα. Κύριε Επίτροπε, ξέρετε κάτι; Γιατί εμείς δεν ξέρουμε τίποτα που είμαστε στην Ελλάδα. Για την υπόθεση Καραϊβάζ μιλάω. Άλλαξε και ο πρόεδρος του δικαστηρίου, έμαθα, σε μια υπόθεση με τη «greek mafia». Φεύγουν οι δικαστές από την Ελλάδα, αλλάζουν και χώρα οι εισαγγελείς. Με τον κορονοϊό είχαμε και λίστες επιχορηγούμενων, φιλικά προσκείμενων, μέσων. Τα SLAPPs είναι βιομηχανία στη χώρα. Όταν ο κύριος Μητσοτάκης ερωτάται για την 108η θέση στην ελευθερία του Τύπου, απαξιώνει τους θεσμούς και λέει «Πού τα βρήκατε αυτά;». Στην Ελλάδα λοιπόν, ο καθένας μπορεί να πει ό,τι θέλει, δεν είναι δικτατορία, το θέμα είναι ότι ο δημοσιογράφος δεν μπορεί να βρει λόγο στα ολιγοπώλια του Τύπου και αυτό είναι πρόβλημα.

Sabrina Pignedoli (NI). – Signor Presidente, onorevoli colleghi, la libertà di stampa misura il grado di salute dello Stato di diritto e ne costituisce un pilastro fondamentale. Questo a parole, ma poi nei fatti?

Come fa un giornalista a poter fare inchieste, a essere il cane da guardia del potere se in tutti gli Stati dell'Unione europea non ci sono leggi che lo tutelino dalle azioni giudiziarie temerarie?

Invece di garantire il diritto di cronaca, si vuole limitare la possibilità di raccontare la verità ai cittadini, con regole assurde che ostacolano la libertà di espressione, come in Italia con la legge Cartabia.

Per non parlare delle perquisizioni e indagini sui telefonini, per scoprire le fonti dei giornalisti, azioni che si aggiungono alla gravissima mancanza di tutela dei *whistleblowers*.

Un caso su tutti è simbolo della nostra incapacità a tutelare la libertà di stampa: quello di Assange, in prigione da quasi quattro anni per averci dato il diritto di conoscere la verità. Lui in prigione e chi ha commesso i crimini di guerra in libertà, impunito.

È questa la nostra democrazia?

PŘEDSEDNICTVÍ: DITA CHARANZOVÁ

místopředsedkyně

Romana Tomc (PPE). – Gospa predsednica! Spoštovani! Neodvisni novinarji so ključni tudi za delovanje pravne države, zato jih moramo seveda zaščititi. Dolžni smo to storiti. Najbrž pa ne bomo našli nobene vlade na svetu, ki bi priznala, da si skuša podrediti medije in noben novinar na svetu ne bo priznal, da je politični aktivist. Pa vendar, tudi taki so, vsaj v Sloveniji.

Kaj recimo menite o novinarjih, ki me zmerjajo s fašistko zaradi moje politične pripadnosti in obkladajo z izrazi, ki jih je težko javno ponoviti. In še več, sodelujejo celo z uglednimi organizacijami, kot so Novinarji brez meja, in prejemajo nagrade. V Sloveniji po raziskavi več kot 75 % medijskega prostora zavzemajo mediji, ki so levo usmerjeni. Posledica tega seveda je, da ne poročajo o velikih aferah, v katere so vpleteni levi politiki, recimo tudi o pritiskih predsednika vlade, ki je včeraj tukaj pred vami nastopil, na policijo, zaradi katerih je odstopila pred dnevi notranja ministrica. Ne poročajo o korupcijskih aferah, klientelizmu in še o mnogih spornih zadevah, ki se nanašajo na člane leve vlade.

Vendar tudi to očitno še ni dovolj, saj je bila ena izmed prvih potez nove slovenske vlade sprememba zakona o nacionalni televiziji in radiu. Politika, ki je sprejela zakon, trdi, da gre za depolitizacijo. To seveda ne drži. Na to sem večkrat opozorila tudi pristojni odbor v Parlamentu in tudi Komisijo. Pravijo, vse je v redu. Jaz pravim, imate dvojna merila. Čez nekaj mesecev bodo brutalno obračunali še s tistimi redkimi izjemami, ki so do slovenske vlade kritični. Nastavili bodo svoje, ki jih bodo proglasili za neodvisne. To … *(Predsednica govornici odvzame besedo.)*

Cyrus Engerer (S&D). – Li nieħdu l-protezzjoni tal-ġurnalisti for granted, anke f'demokraziji moderni, fejn is-Saltna tad-Dritt hija rrispettata, hu żball illi ma naffordjawx.

Is-sena l-oħra aktar minn 900 ġurnalist irrapportaw illi ġew ippersegwitati, uħud minnhom sfaw anke assassinati. Għalhekk nilqa' l-evalwazzjoni tal-Kummissjoni Ewropea u r-rakkomandazzjonijiet tagħha. Madankollu, inħeġġeġ lill-Kummissjoni Ewropea biex tkun iktar ambizzjuża u aktar b'saħħitha fejn hemm nuqqasijiet serji.

Illum ma rridx inħares lejn il-passat. M'iniex se nitkellem fuq id-diversi assassinji ta' ġurnalisti f'numru ta' pajjizi Ewropej, inkluż tiegħi, u mhux se nidħol fuq kif il-Kummissjoni faħħret l-avvanzi ta' Malta f'dan il-qasam. U mhux se nitkellem l-anqas dwar kif il-Greċja hemm eskalazzjoni ta' persekuzzjoni fuq ġurnalisti, saħansitra mill-istituzzjonijiet, biċ-cherry on the cake ikun l-ispijjar tal-ġurnalisti u tal-Kap tal-Oppożizzjoni Grieg mill-istess istituzzjonijiet.

Illum irrid nitkellem dwar soluzzjonijiet, lil hinn mill-buzz words u d-diskors sabiħ li issa dejjaq lil kulħadd, inkluż lill-ġurnalisti u lili.

X'nistgħu nagħmlu? X'jistgħu jagħmlu l-awtoritajiet fl-Istati Membri tagħna?

Hemm bżonn illi l-Istati Membri jagħtu protezzjoni legali lis-sorsi tal-midja, jagħtu rikonixximent legali lill-ġurnaliżmu bħala r-raba' pilastru, jiżguraw rimedji fil-liġi kriminali meta l-ġurnalisti jiġu aggrediti, jaraw li kull Stat Membru jkollu awtorità nazzjonali li thares is-sigurta tal-ġurnalisti, u ladarba tidħol il-liġi tal-iSLAPP, ikun hemm taħriġ lill-ġudikanti.

Kummisarju, irridu wkoll niżguraw li l-ġurnalisti jitneħħewlhom il-piż tal-ispejjeż tal-qrati – sakemm ma jkunux misjuba ħatja – u fejn dan ma jsirx, għandu jkun hemm fond Ewropew li jgħinhom f'dan ir-rigward.

Il-libertà tal-istampa hija l-garanzija ta' soċjeta ġusta u hija l-gwardjana tagħna lkoll.

Maite Pagazaurtundúa (Renew). – Señora presidenta, señor comisario, el informe sobre el Estado de Derecho acierta al reunir en un mismo documento aspectos como la lucha contra la corrupción, el pluralismo y la libertad de los medios de comunicación. Porque todos ellos nos permiten crear una fotografía global sobre el estado de salud de nuestras democracias. En materia de transparencia de la propiedad de los medios de comunicación nos sigue preocupando la ausencia de reglas suficientes sobre el reparto de la publicidad institucional y el conflicto de intereses.

Pero están también los casos de acoso concretos, sistemáticos, a periodistas europeos por parte de países extraeuropeos. Es el caso concreto y real de Ignacio Cembrero, un gran periodista español, encausado ya por cuarta vez por parte de Marruecos por informar sobre la política alauí, mientras las autoridades españolas permanecen indiferentes y dejan que un periodista español sea acosado y hostigado judicialmente. Señor comisario, algo debemos hacer.

La lucha contra la corrupción y la libertad de prensa son dos pilares básicos de nuestras democracias que debemos exigir con el mayor rigor desde Europa, sobre todo, cuando vemos a nuestros Estados flaquear abiertamente y también cuando, desgraciadamente, el veneno de la corrupción entra en nuestra propia institución.

Tineke Strik (Verts/ALE). – Madam President, Council, Commissioner, the freedom and independence of journalists are strong indicators of the quality of democracy and the rule of law. And yet these safeguards are increasingly at risk in the EU. Intimidation, SLAPP cases and surveillance are applied in notorious autocracies like Poland and Hungary, but just as well in other states, including Greece.

The Commission has confirmed persistent attacks and threats against journalists in Greece, and this repression has an intentional, chilling effect. Reporters on push-backs and other human rights violations are specifically targeted. The Greek policy of silencing media and civil society has created a hostile environment which is detrimental to the necessary checks and balances of an open society.

Impunity at the EU level has fuelled this development, and even with the long-awaited Media Freedom Act, only enforcement of the rules can stop this repression in all our Member States. So I urge the Commission to take legal action, protect our democracies and fundamental freedoms, protect journalists.

Clare Daly (The Left). – Madam President, I really wish I could be standing up here joining in the eulogies to a free media and its crucial role as a pillar in our democracies. But I look at the media that we have, and I don't see much freedom.

Our media is strangled by money. It's hobbled by fear. For most media organisations, access to power is far more important than holding power to account. Careers depend on toeing the line. Balance sheets demand a constant churn of stories – stories which are recycled from official statements, press releases, social media, anywhere but out in the world; anything but upset the status quo.

Nick Davies described this in 2008 as 'the mass production of ignorance'. 14 years later, it's way worse now. So if we want to hold ourselves as the defenders of media freedom, we have to recognise that our mainstream media is anything but free. It's a water carrier for political and corporate power dedicated to enforcing the demands of global capital, and people like Julian Assange are the exceptions, the ones who pay the price. If we don't accept that, we're on a hiding to nothing.

Carles Puigdemont i Casamajó (NI). – Madam President, Commissioner, press freedom is threatened by EU Member States that use software such as Pegasus or Candiru to spy on journalists just like they do on dissidents, lawyers and politicians. It is also threatened by the fabrication of evidence by public authorities to attack the reputation of political opponents, which are presented as solid evidence to which the press gives credibility.

I am a witness of both things, as a politician and as a journalist. The Commission should be more commanding in front of the states where these violations are taking place, which scandalise the citizens of countries such as Poland, Greece and Spain because democracy is at stake.

Άννα-Μισέλ Ασημακοπούλου (PPE). – Κυρία Πρόεδρε, κύριε Επίτροπε, τα θέματα Τύπου είναι και θέματα κράτους δικαίου και ως τέτοια τα αντιμετωπίζουμε στην πατρίδα μου, την Ελλάδα. Οπότε σταματήστε να συκοφαντείτε την Ελλάδα, η οποία από την πρώτη στιγμή καλωσόρισε την Ευρωπαϊκή Πράξη για την ελευθερία των μέσων ενημέρωσης, μια πρωτοβουλία ορόσημο για την Ευρωπαϊκή Ένωση. Συμμετέχουμε γι' αυτό ενεργά στον γόνιμο διάλογο, μέσα από τον οποίο θα αποκρυσταλλωθεί ένα ενιαίο αδιάβλητο πλαίσιο που θα ενδυναμώνει την ελευθεροτυπία και θα ενισχύει τη δημοκρατία. Σήμερα είναι η Ελλάδα αυτή που έχει αναλάβει πρωτοβουλίες και δράσεις για τη διασφάλιση της προστασίας, της ασφάλειας, της ελευθερίας και της ενίσχυσης του δημοσιογραφικού λειτουργήματος, και αυτό μέσα από μια task force που συντονίζει τη δράση κράτους και επαγγελματιών του χώρου, προασπίζει τα συμφέροντά τους και βρίσκεται σε αγαστή συνεργασία με τις ευρωπαϊκές αρχές και την αρμόδια Επίτροπο.

Η διαφάνεια, κυρίες και κύριοι συνάδελφοι, αποτελεί τη λέξη-κλειδί για τις κρατικές δράσεις αλλά και την κρατική ενίσχυση των μέσων ενημέρωσης. Γι' αυτό, στο ελληνικό κοινοβούλιο ψηφίζεται αυτές τις ημέρες ένα νομοσχέδιο που θα θέσει κανόνες πλήρους διαφάνειας σχετικά με τέτοιες χρηματοδοτήσεις, αλλά και για τη στελέχωση των μέσων ενημέρωσης με επαγγελματίες. Η Ελλάδα είναι μια δημοκρατική χώρα για όλους, πολίτες και δημοσιογράφους και το αποδεικνύει στην πράξη, χωρίς εξαιρέσεις, χωρίς σκιές, χωρίς αστερίσκους, θέτοντας θεσμικά εχέγγυα. Ο Τύπος χαρακτηρίζεται από αξιοπιστία και πλουραλισμό, απολαμβάνοντας παράλληλα την ελευθερία που απαιτείται, ώστε τελικά ο πολίτης να πληροφορείται έγκυρα και αντικειμενικά, διότι αυτό τελικά είναι και το ζητούμενο.

Matjaž Nemec (S&D). – Gospa predsednica! Spoštovani visoki zbor! Medijska svoboda v Evropi in širše je vedno bolj ogrožena in z njo je neposredno ogrožena tudi naša demokracija. Medijski prostor v Uniji je pod vse večjim pritiskom zaradi politično usmerjenega javnega financiranja, digitalizacije, ki zmanjšuje prihodke, in poskusov tujega vmešavanja.

Med drugim Evropska unija ni nikakršna varna cona za novinarje in raziskovalce. Na svojih plečih nosi številna ustrahovanja, grožnje novinarjem ter seveda tudi umore. Spomnimo se na primer utišanja novinarjev z Malte, Slovaške, Grčije in celo Nizozemske. To je nedopustno.

Zato potrebujemo zakonodajo, ki bo ščitila novinarje, medijem pa zagotavljala neodvisno delovanje in seveda pluralnost. Zato pozdravljam zadnji predlog Komisije. Komisarka Jourova je poudarila, da je bila ta spodbujena tudi zaradi dogajanja v moji državi, v Sloveniji. V moji državi je namreč pod prejšnjo vlado hudo nastradala medijska svoboda. Finančno izčrpavanje je doživljala Slovenska tiskovna agencija STA, javna RTV pa še danes trpi pod pritiski zaradi politične ugrabitve. A temu smo se in se bomo upirali. Brez politike v javni RTV, za več medijske svobode, za neodvisnost in varnost novinarjev ter seveda za zdravo demokracijo. Hvala lepa.

Mittwoch, 14. Dezember 2022

Ramona Strugariu (Renew). – Madam President, press freedom is a key condition for a functioning democracy under the rule of law. The findings of the 2022 Commission's rule of law report demonstrate once again that this vital pillar needs immediate reinforcing not only in some, but in all, Member States. To be very clear, there is no rule of law without a free press, and the reality on the ground is that too often journalists face enormous political pressure. Editorial independence is under threat. They are harassed to the point of having to abandon their profession and some politicians, their oligarch friends, as well as third country exponents, make constant efforts to control the press and distort realities.

Through the anti-SLAPP directive and the European Media Freedom Act, we have the responsibility to equip the press with the necessary tools to protect its independence. These acts are a vital part of our framework for upholding the rule of law. Journalism is about much more than just the mere provision of services. It is about democracy, freedom, values, education and fighting for the truth. If we want to keep and defend these things, journalists must feel safe, empowered and financially independent, and stay free. We owe this to them.

Erik Marquardt (Verts/ALE). – Frau Präsidentin, Herr Kommissar! Ich bin ehrlicherweise ein bisschen erschrocken über einige Reden – natürlich nicht über alle. Ich wollte deswegen sagen, dass Angriffe auf die Pressefreiheit nicht erst beginnen, wenn Journalistinnen und Journalisten ermordet werden oder bedroht werden, sondern aus meiner Sicht beginnt das schon, wenn wir anfangen, hier das Parlament zu nutzen, um über einige Berichte zu sagen: Das ist überhaupt keine freie Presse, das hat mit Pressefreiheit gar nichts zu tun. Und die anderen Berichte, die uns gefallen, die sind dann toll.

Journalismus, Pressefreiheit, das muss uns nicht gefallen, soll uns nicht mal gefallen. Als Politiker ist es einfach wichtig, dass Presse uns auf die Finger schaut, dass Skandale aufgedeckt werden, dass die richtigen Konsequenzen gezogen werden, dass Journalismus bei der Meinungsbildung unterstützt. Ja, nicht jeder Bericht ist richtig, und ja, es gibt natürlich auch Organisationen, die versuchen, Presse auszunutzen oder zu kaufen.

Aber mich stört, dass wir insgesamt hier eine breite Mehrheit für Pressefreiheit haben, wenn wir gefragt werden: Sind wir denn eigentlich alle für Pressefreiheit, dass es aber in der Praxis schon so ist, dass an den Außengrenzen zum Beispiel Presseberichte mit einmal als Fake News bezeichnet werden, dass mit einem Mal gesagt wird: Wir haben doch eigentlich überhaupt keine Notwendigkeit, dass Presse hier Zugang bekommt. All diese Einschränkungen von Pressefreiheit müssen wir angehen. Das ist unsere Aufgabe. Wir sollen die Pressefreiheit nicht beklatschen, sondern wir sollen sie durchsetzen.

Isabel Wiseler-Lima (PPE). – Madame la Présidente, je crois en notre démocratie et je crois en nos valeurs. Pour les protéger, pour leur permettre même d'exister, les journalistes jouent un rôle essentiel. Ils sont indispensables à la démocratie. Défendre les journalistes, c'est aussi sauvegarder la liberté d'expression et l'indépendance des médias. C'est l'information fiable qui permet aux citoyens de décider en connaissance de cause. C'est en créant l'espace de liberté nécessaire ainsi que les conditions de sécurité requises que les journalistes pourront exercer leur métier: informer le public, avec tout le sérieux que cette tâche implique.

À nous il incombe de créer les conditions juridiques nécessaires pour que leur environnement de travail soit sûr. C'est pour cela que je salue nos textes, qui cherchent à empêcher des poursuites judiciaires abusives ou à favoriser, quand cela est nécessaire, une protection policière rapprochée.

Or, aujourd'hui, les formes de harcèlement des journalistes se sont démultipliées et prennent des formes inattendues. Sur le net, à l'aide des réseaux sociaux, c'est souvent la réputation que l'on cherche à détruire, surtout quand il s'agit de journalistes d'investigation ou de vérificateurs de faits. Malheureusement, les chiffres le montrent, les femmes journalistes sont encore plus ciblées que leurs confrères. Il faut que nous ayons conscience de ces nouvelles données et que nous adaptions toutes nos mesures, y compris au niveau des États membres.

Иво Христов (S&D). – Г-жо Председател, кризата намалява приходите от реклама, а войната раздува бюджетите за пропаганда. Някогашните меродавни медии днес оцеляват или печелят от дезинформация. Регулацията често се изражда в цензура, тя вече задушава дори социалните мрежи. Главният редактор на Euractiv – Гърция Спирос Сидерис се оказа обект на разработка за шпионски софтуер. На конференция в София той сподели как реагира проследяваният човек – изпитва безпричинна вина, страхува се за близките си, става предпазлив. Мнозина са като Спирос. Психологията на проследявания човек парализира европейската журналистика. Работата на комисията „Пегас“ е пряко свързана с медийната свобода. Казусът Джулиан Асанж също.

В България десницата превърна държавното финансиране в инструмент за контрол над медиите. Собствеността им остава неясна, а свободната журналистика бе маргинализирана. Решението е в гарантиран процент от бюджета за финансиране на обществените медии като златен стандарт за достоверна информация, в криптираната защита на личните и професионалните права на журналистите, които изпълняват важна обществена мисия, прозрачната собственост, която осветлява скритите интереси зад всяка медия.

Katalin Cseh (Renew). – Madam President, good evening and welcome to the evening news: Viktor Orbán changed his profile picture. The photo got 60 000 likes in a few hours and thus only likes with comments also. Many think he looks more handsome than earlier. Others believe the photo depicts a confident and strong leader.

So this is an actual quote from a news show on Hungary's second largest TV station. It also happens to be owned by Orbán's childhood friend. So, colleagues, assaults against media freedom doesn't always entail imprisoned journalists. Autocrats get much more sophisticated. It can happen through politically connected oligarchs capturing newsrooms. Hungary's Népszabadság, Origo, Index were all muzzled like this.

So, Commissioner, we need a strong and enforceable Media Freedom Act that also tackles market concentration. We need effective protection from spying, guarantees for the independence of public service, media and, in general, strong European rules.

Europe needs to honour the memory of Daphne Caruana Galizia and Ján Kuciak, reporters who were murdered for doing their job. And the best way to do so stand up against predators of media freedom.

Diana Riba i Giner (Verts/ALE). – Señora presidenta, señor comisario, señor ministro, informar y estar informados son derechos indiscutibles en una democracia. Por eso estamos en estado de alerta. El último *Media Pluralism Monitor* recoge un número creciente de demandas contra la libertad de expresión en países como Bulgaria, Croacia, Malta, Rumanía o España e informa de un ambiente generalizado de crecientes amenazas y discursos de odio.

Seamos claros. La libertad de prensa en Europa está en peligro: monopolios mediáticos y medios directamente capturados por Estados, o periodistas que se convierten en víctimas de ciberespionaje o que son, incluso, asesinados, como Yorgos Karaivaz en Grecia y Peter R. de Vries en los Países Bajos, en el año 2021.

Cuando el periodismo está en riesgo, también lo está el debate público y la democracia misma. Fortalecer la Directiva contra las DECPP y la Ley de Libertad de los Medios de Comunicación es prioritario. Porque no hay democracia sin un contexto informativo y mediático basado en valores públicos y democráticos, interseccional, sostenible e inclusivo.

Salvatore De Meo (PPE). – Signora Presidente, onorevoli colleghi, la Federazione internazionale dei giornalisti ha già documentato, nel 2022, 59 omicidi di professionisti dei media, dodici in più rispetto al 2021. E ancora più sconcertante che nove omicidi di giornalisti su dieci restano tuttora impuniti.

Sono dei dati allarmanti, soprattutto se vengono associati anche ai tantissimi episodi di violenza e intimidazione ai danni di chi sceglie di raccontare la verità, tutelando e rafforzando di conseguenza la nostra democrazia.

La libertà di espressione, la libertà dei media e il pluralismo sono sanciti nella Carta dei diritti fondamentali dell'Unione, nonché nella Convenzione europea dei diritti dell'uomo.

È evidente che esiste un collegamento tra la libertà di stampa e lo Stato di diritto, perché promuovere e difendere lo Stato di diritto significa anche promuovere e difendere la libertà di stampa e di tutti coloro che si adoperano per questa.

Una cosa è certa anche dalla discussione odierna: nonostante le tante iniziative europee, dobbiamo essere più determinanti e incisivi di quanto non lo siamo stati nel caso della giornalista maltese uccisa pochi anni fa, oppure nei riguardi dell'attuale aggressione russa o delle rivolte in Iran, dove giornalisti, cameraman, fotografi vengono uccisi o arrestati solo perché vogliono occultare la verità in favore di una propaganda fatta di disinformazione e manipolazione.

La libertà di stampa è uno dei capisaldi del nostro Stato di diritto e, in quanto tale, va promossa e difesa perché non ci può essere democrazia senza libertà e pluralismo dei media. Un attacco ai media è un attacco alla nostra democrazia.

Domènec Ruiz Devesa (S&D). – Señora vicepresidenta Charanzová, señor ministro Bek, señor comisario Hahn, sin duda, sin periodismo libre no hay democracia que funcione. Es muy preocupante que en el informe sobre el Estado de Derecho del año 2022 veamos el deterioro del indicador relativo a la profesión periodística y a su protección. Esta tendencia viene de lejos. Recordemos que, desde el año 2015, quince periodistas han sido asesinados en la Unión Europea: en Francia, Malta, Grecia, Países Bajos, Dinamarca, Polonia, antiguamente Reino Unido y Eslovaquia.

Y vemos cómo algunos países, desgraciadamente, van a peor. En lo que respecta a las amenazas a la seguridad física de periodistas, la Comisión ha tenido que hacer recomendaciones específicas para Eslovaquia y Grecia. Pero, además, Reporteros Sin Fronteras designó a Grecia, en el año 2022, como el peor país de la Unión Europea en libertad de prensa. Peor que Hungría, incluso. Los periodistas que en este país quieren informar sobre la política migratoria y las violaciones de los derechos humanos de los emigrantes son verdaderos héroes que se están jugando el tipo. Son víctimas de declaraciones hostiles por parte de responsables políticos. Sufren acoso y agresiones, incluso por parte de la policía, y hasta de detenciones.

Esta situación tiene que cesar y la Comisión tiene que seguir actuando. Yo diría que todavía con mayor énfasis en el caso que he descrito.

Γεώργιος Κύρτσος (Renew). – Κυρία Πρόεδρε, θα ήθελα η Ευρωπαϊκή Επιτροπή να γίνει πιο δυναμική στις παρεμβάσεις της υπέρ της ελευθερίας των μέσων ενημέρωσης στα κράτη μέλη. Η πίεση στα μέσα ενημέρωσης είναι συνήθως το πρώτο σύμπτωμα της στροφής μιας κυβέρνησης προς τον αυταρχισμό. Χαρακτηριστική είναι η περίπτωση της κυβέρνησης Μητσοτάκη, η οποία, σύμφωνα με την αξιολόγηση των «Δημοσιογράφων Χωρίς Σύνορα», έχει επιβάλει τους μεγαλύτερους περιορισμούς στην ελευθερία των μέσων ενημέρωσης μεταξύ των 27 κρατών της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης και μεγαλύτερους περιορισμούς από ό,τι ισχύουν στις χώρες των Δυτικών Βαλκανίων. Ο Μητσοτάκης, βέβαια, αμφισβητεί την εγκυρότητα των «Δημοσιογράφων Χωρίς Σύνορα», ωστόσο η συγκεκριμένη Μη Κυβερνητική Οργάνωση είναι συνεργάτης του Ευρωπαϊκού Κοινοβουλίου. Είμαι ένας ευρωβουλευτής του οποίου τα τηλέφωνα παρακολουθούνται με εντολή Μητσοτάκη, όπως άλλωστε και του συναδέλφου Ανδρουλάκη των Σοσιαλιστών. Πρώτα άρχισε η παρακολούθηση των δημοσιογράφων και στη συνέχεια επεκτάθηκε στους πολιτικούς. Ιδού η απόδειξη ότι από τον περιορισμό της ελευθερίας των ΜΜΕ στην Ελλάδα περάσαμε σε μεθόδους που θυμίζουν τον Berisha της Αλβανίας και τον Gruevski της Βόρειας Μακεδονίας. Πρέπει να αντιδράσουμε όλοι μαζί.

Gwendoline Delbos-Corfield (Verts/ALE). – Madame la Présidente, la liberté de la presse et le pluralisme des médias, sans lesquels il n'existe tout simplement pas de démocratie, ne sont plus protégés dans beaucoup d'États membres. Il faut donc des dispositions européennes. Faisons un tour d'horizon.

Hongrie, 85e sur 180 dans le classement Reporters sans frontières de 2022. La Fondation KESMA regroupe 500 médias nationaux et locaux au service aveugle du gouvernement, dans une totale opacité sur les fonds publics. La Commission européenne dit ne rien pouvoir faire. Peut-être pourra-t-on empêcher que cela se reproduise ailleurs: des oligarques qui achètent des médias et en font donation à un gouvernement.

Grèce, 108e au classement. Un journaliste abattu devant son domicile, une enquête qui patine et des violences policières connues à l'égard des journalistes qui travaillent sur le sujet des réfugiés, de ceux qui couvrent les manifestations et de ceux qui révèlent la corruption.

Malte, 78e. Peu de progrès dans l'enquête sur l'assassinat de Daphne Caruana Galizia, alors que, en Slovaquie, la justice a été efficace dans le cas de Ján Kuciak et n'a plus connu d'entraves par le politique au bout d'un moment. Spécificité de la loi maltaise: les proches héritent des procès intentés aux journalistes.

France, 26e. Là, c'est le privé qui pose problème: concentration extrême des médias, dix actionnaires détiennent 81 % de la diffusion des quotidiens nationaux et 95 % des hebdomadaires. Le groupe Bolloré censure, interdit les publications, accumule les poursuites-bâillons et insulte certains politiques.

Željana Zovko (PPE). – Madam President, dear Commissioner, I fully subscribe to the conclusion of the Commission's 2022 report on the rule of law that states that independent and free media are the watchdogs of democracy and are key for the rule of law. Free media is helping to inform and empower citizens and allow them to contribute to the democratic debate. Therefore, I underline the importance that both local and national media reflect the cultural, linguistic and social diversity of our societies.

Unfortunately, journalists and other media actors continue to face violence, threats and harassment in the European Union. Recent legislative reforms have limited these abuses in our Member States, and I welcome supportive action by the Commission in this regard. But more needs to be done. We need to safeguard transparency of ownership and funding of media providers. We should establish actions that help in the fight against disinformation and provide measures for the prevention of corruption. Journalists deserve to operate with a free mind and without external pressure.

Theresa Muigg (S&D). – Frau Präsidentin! Daphne Caruana Galizia, Jan Kuciak, Lyra McKee, Peter de Vries und Giorgos Karaivaz – Personen, die in den letzten fünf Jahren im Zuge ihrer journalistischen Arbeit in Europa ermordet wurden. Für sie können wir heute nichts mehr tun. Was wir tun können, ist, unsere Aufgabe hier und heute ernst zu nehmen. Denn dort, wo Journalistinnen ihr Leben lassen, wo die Demokratie bedroht wird, wo die Macht der Unwahrheiten immer stärker wird, dort werden wir im Europäischen Parlament jene sein, die für eine freie Meinungsäußerung kämpfen, die für einen Journalismus ohne Angst vor Angriffen kämpfen.

Wir tun damit nichts Geringeres, als die essenziellen Bestandteile der Grundrechtecharta der Europäischen Union zu verteidigen. Denn nur, wenn sie in jedem Mitgliedstaat ausnahmslos und voll umgesetzt und verteidigt werden, bieten wir jene Europäische Union, die wir versprechen. Wir alle brauchen den *European Media Freedom Act*. Dieses Gesetz muss Journalistinnen schützen, vor Spyware, vor Überwachung, vor Angriffen. Aber vor allem muss sie auch uns schützen. Denn unsere freien und unabhängigen Medien sind die Basis einer demokratischen und freien Gesellschaft.

Denken wir an den Beginn des russischen Angriffskriegs auf die Ukraine. Denken wir an die Flut der Unwahrheiten, die uns überschwemmt hat. Denken wir daran, wie dringend wir eine echte Berichterstattung von den EU-Außengrenzen brauchen. Wirklich unabhängigen Journalismus nennt man zu Recht die vierte Gewalt, denn wir brauchen ihn, um Grundrechte und Demokratie, um Freiheit, um den Kern unserer europäischen Wertegemeinschaft zu verteidigen. Kämpfen wir dafür!

Irena Joveva (Renew). – Gospa predsednica! Hvala! Zagotavljanje varnosti novinark in novinarjev je predpogoj učinkovite medijske svobode, ki je eden od temeljev vladavine prava. Za zagotavljanje njihove varnosti na ravni Unije postavljamo standarde v vseh poročilih, akcijskih načrtih, zakonodajnih predlogih, bolj ali manj uspešno.

Pogosto omenjamo tudi kakovost poročanja, ki vpliva na verodostojnost posredovanih informacij. Kakovost, ki pa se s porastom dezinformacij, poseganjem v uredniško politiko in cenzuro oziroma samocenzuro, vztrajno niža. Smo na točki, ko zgolj omenjanje pomena kakovostnega poročanja ni dovolj. Dajmo biti jasni. Ne more vsakdo biti novinar samo zato, ker si, ne vem, želi nastopati na televiziji, kaj šele zato, ker želi izpolnjevati želje dela neke politike. Kaj želim povedati? Da nam za zagotavljanje pomembnega vidika vladavine prava manjkajo jasno postavljeni standardi določanja kakovosti opravljanja novinarskega poklica. Čas je, da jih postavimo. Morda ravno v aktu o svobodi medijev.

Nuno Melo (PPE). – Senhora Presidente, caros colegas, não há liberdade de imprensa sem condições de trabalho. Em muitos países da União Europeia, começando por Portugal, grande parte dos jornalistas tem salários miseráveis e os empregos são precários. Toda a liberdade fica, assim, condicionada pelo justificado sentimento de injustiça e de revolta.

Não há liberdade de imprensa sem diversidade. A crescente colocação de órgãos de comunicação social sob a alçada dos mesmos grupos financeiros mata a diversidade, alinhando cada vez mais jornalistas pelo filtro de cada vez menos linhas editoriais. Não há liberdade de imprensa sem a independência do poder político.

Os auxílios dos governos que são representados por partidos políticos a órgãos de comunicação social em dificuldades extremas, minam o distanciamento necessário entre quem informa e algum poder político, justificando todas as suspeições.

Finalmente, não há liberdade de imprensa sem liberdade de expressão e segurança dos jornalistas. Na União Europeia, construída na base do respeito pela liberdade e os direitos fundamentais, há jornalistas que são fisicamente intimidados e até assassinados porque querem informar.

A este propósito, registe-se, a Federação Internacional de Jornalistas relata que em 2022 morreram no mundo 67 jornalistas, contra 47 no ano passado. Neste momento, há 375 jornalistas detidos, muitos deles europeus. O Parlamento Europeu está do lado certo desta história, está do lado da imprensa livre.

Massimiliano Smeriglio (S&D). – Signora Presidente, onorevoli colleghi, l'Europa è considerata un posto sicuro per i giornalisti, tuttavia le minacce e gli attacchi contro di loro sono in preoccupante aumento, così come le intimidazioni e le pressioni.

La preoccupazione maggiore riguarda le condizioni di lavoro precarie e la ricattabilità, nonché la tutela delle fonti e del segreto professionale.

In merito alla tutela delle fonti, sette paesi dell'UE rientrano nella categoria rischio medio secondo il *Media pluralism monitor*. Tra questi vi è l'Italia, dove assistiamo a richieste da parte della magistratura di acquisire dati relativi a comunicazioni private dei giornalisti, nonostante la piena disponibilità a collaborare. A questo proposito voglio esprimere piena solidarietà a Sigfrido Ranucci e alla redazione di Report, importante trasmissione di inchiesta.

Il ripetersi di questi casi pone l'urgenza di approvare normative più efficaci a tutela delle fonti e del segreto professionale; il lavoro sulla legge europea sulla libertà dei media rappresenta una grande opportunità per rafforzare l'indipendenza della stampa.

La Corte europea dei diritti dell'uomo ha ribadito che ingerenze di questo tipo equivalgono a un attacco al diritto dei cittadini alla libera informazione. In alcuni Paesi questo monito rimane ancora oggi inascoltato.

Magdalena Adamowicz (PPE). – Pani Przewodnicząca! Panie Komisarzu! Zdrowa demokracja może istnieć tylko wówczas, gdy obywatele mają dostęp do uczciwych i obiektywnych informacji. Gdy atakowani i zastraszani są niezależni dziennikarze, wówczas atakowane jest prawo obywateli do dostępu do informacji i uczciwych wyborów.

Atak, a w szczególności atak władzy na niezależne dziennikarstwo, to atak na fundamenty państwa prawa. Powtarzam: ochrona dziennikarzy tworzących wolne i niezależne media to ochrona bezpieczników demokracji. Walka z upolitycznieniem mediów i atakami na niezależnych dziennikarzy to nie tylko kwestia ochrony praw człowieka i wolności słowa. To często ataki brutalne i krwawe, zamykające usta na zawsze. Gdy z głośników i ekranów mediów publicznych sączy się mowa nienawiści, wówczas konsekwencją może być śmierć. Media, gdy stają się narzędziem politycznej manipulacji, mogą stać się nożem w sercu naszej demokracji.

Działania unijne nie mogą ograniczyć się do monitoringu. Raporty Komisji w tej kwestii są alarmujące. Za nimi muszą iść wymierne narzędzia – kontrola własności mediów, ochrona przejrzystości i niezależności finansowania, w szczególności mediów publicznych, ochrona i niezależność dziennikarzy.

Tom Vandenkendelaere (PPE). – Voorzitter, commissaris, mediavrijheid en pluralisme vormen de kern van onze Europese waarden. Geen enkele journalist zou mogen sterven of schade oplopen omwille van zijn perskaart. Omdat journalisten transparantie creëren. Omdat zij ons toegang geven tot een publiek goed, namelijk informatie. Hun werk is essentieel voor onze democratie. Meer dan ooit staat ook hun bescherming voorop, want helaas nemen de aanvallen op de media de afgelopen jaren toe.

In 2022 stierven 67 journalisten wereldwijd, vergeleken met 47 journalisten het jaar voordien, volgens de Internationale Federatie van Journalisten. Oekraïne is duidelijk het gevaarlijkste land voor journalisten in 2022, met twaalf vermoorde journalisten op de teller.

Ook de duidelijke erosie van veilige omgevingen die beletten dat media hun werk vrij kunnen doen, baart zorgen. Het aantal fysieke, juridische en online bedreigingen en aanvallen op mediaprofessionals blijft gestaag toenemen. We zien ook dat vrouwelijke journalisten, journalisten die tot minderheidsgroepen behoren, of journalisten die rapporteren over gelijkheidskwesties, bijzonder kwetsbaar blijven voor bedreigingen en aanvallen.

Het is onze collectieve verantwoordelijkheid om vrije media te verdedigen, schendingen van mediavrijheid recht te zetten en doortastende maatregelen te treffen die Europa écht veiliger maken voor journalisten.

Sunčana Glavak (PPE). – Poštovana predsjedavajuća, povjereniče, kolegice i kolege, da, pluralizam i sloboda medija dio su Povelje o temeljnim pravima Europske unije i Europske konvencije o ljudskim pravima.

Poštivanje i nepovredivost ovih prava i načela predstavljaju ključnu ulogu za opstojnost demokracije, kao i njezinih procesa te institucija. Unatoč tome svemu što je napisano, posljednje izvješće izražava zabrinutost zbog postojeće situacije. Između ostalog, čuli smo i danas crne brojke. Prošlog petka objavljeno je, i to Međunarodna federacija novinara je objavila da je 67 medijskih profesionalaca ubijeno na poslu ove godine, 40% više nego prošle godine. Među ostalim, svjedočimo slučajevima degradiranja novinarske struke, politizacije medija, neprovođenjem prava na pristup informacijama, nedostatka transparentnosti u vlasničkim strukturama. Stoga pozdravljam najavljeni akt o slobodi medija kao i tzv. Anti-SLAPP direktivu. Želim se upravo na nju referirati jer Republika Hrvatska među prvim je članicama prije godinu dana osnovala stručnu skupinu u Ministarstvu kulture i medija i sustavno se počela baviti SLAPP tužbama. Održavaju se edukativne radionice uz predstavnike strukovnih udruga, novinara, Sindikata novinara, Ministarstva pravosuđa, Hrvatskog novinarskog društva, profesora Pravnog fakulteta, nakladnika. Cilj je zaštita novinara od neosnovanih ili zlonamjernih sudskih postupaka.

Naše je pravo i obveza kao zastupnika u Europskom parlamentu osigurati očuvanje vladavine prava i zaštitu temeljnih vrijednosti i znamo, kolegice i kolege, demokracija nema alternativu. Ali ne zaboravimo da medijski integritet podrazumijeva profesionalnost i poštivanje standarda, a prva i posljednja riječ novinara mora biti istina.

Peter Pollák (PPE). – Vážená pani predsedajúca, napriek tomu, že tu v Európskom parlamente často diskutujeme o postavení a o ochrane novinárov, novinári v Európe sú stále ohrození. Je stále mnoho novinárov, ktorým nie je umožnené vykonávať svoju prácu slobodne, bez zastrašovania, obmedzovania či strachu o svoj život a život svojich blízkych. Na vlastné oči dnes vidíme odvážnych novinárov na Ukrajine, ktorí riskujú svoje životy, aby sa svet dozvedel o pravde a zverstvách ruskej agresie. Taktiež vidíme odvážnych novinárov v Rusku, kde čelia najtvrdším trestom len za to, že riskujú a chcú šíriť pravdu. Európa má vlastných hrdinov: Jána Kuciaka zo Slovenska, Daphne Galiziovú z Malty, ktorých život vyhasol práve kvôli tomu, že chceli písať pravdu. Žiaľ, slobodná žurnalistika vymiera. Nedivme sa, keďže sú novinári pod obrovským tlakom. Ako môžu vyhrať boj s mafiánmi, skorumpovaným politikmi či oligarchami, keď na to nemajú vytvorené žiadne podmienky? V rôznych krajinách Európy skupujú mienkotvorné médiá bohatí oligarchovia, ktorí často stavajú svoj biznis na hranu zákona. Doslova korumpujú politikov a cez média, ktoré vlastnia, útočia prostredníctvom dosadených novinárov na tých, ktorí proti korupcii bojujú. Nehľadajú pravdu, reprezentujú záujmy svojich mecenášov a kazia dobré meno poctivým žurnalistom. Aj preto sa častejšie stretávame so pseudonovinármi, ktorí šíria dezinformácie, nenávisť a klamstvá. Ak chceme slobodnú Európu a spravodlivosť, spravodlivú spoločnosť, musíme dať novinárom dostatok prostriedkov vrátane ich osobnej ochrany. Nemôžeme už dopustiť, aby sa zopakovalo to, čo sa stalo Jánovi a Daphne.

David Casa (PPE). – Fl-2022, ilqajna proposti leġiżlattivi ġodda mill-Kummissjoni – proposti li jittrattaw il-libertà tal-istampa, li jipproteġu aħjar lill-ġurnalisti u li jsaħħu l-qagħda u l-indipendenza tal-ġurnaliżmu. Dawn huma proposti li jiena u sħabi ilna snin niġġieldu għalihom, u din is-sena waslu. U rrid nibda, allura, billi nirringrazzja lill-Kummissarju Jourova għax-xogħol immens illi għamlet biex allura jista' jkollna dawn il-proposti quddiemna. Proposti biex nikkumbattu, pereżempju, l-użu tal-kawżi abbużivi, l-iSLAPPs, imsejħa aħjar bħala Daphne's law.

Grazzi għax-xogħol tal-Kummissjoni, għandna stampa ċara ta' x'inhi s-sitwazzjoni bħalissa. Madwar l-Ewropa, il-libertà tal-istampa mhi xejn feliċi.

Biex nikkwota mir-rapport dwar Malta, fejn il-Kummissjoni allura qiegħda tgħid li tinnota l-influwenza sinifikanti u diretta fix-xandir pubbliku. Din mhix aċċettabbli. Mhijiex aċċettabbli u tkompli tgħid illi m'hemmx rieda biex titjieb is-sitwazzjoni.

Sinjura President, l-indħil mill-gvernijiet fix-xandir pubbliku huwa theddida għad-demokrazija. U allura biex insaħħu d-demokrazija, irridu nsaħħu l-indipendenza tal-ġurnaliżmu fl-Ewropa.

Dan il-Parlament għaraf lil Daphne Caruana Galizia, għaraf lil xogħolha, għaraf lill-valuri li kienet temmen fihom, u għaraf li meta lill-ġurnalisti nabbandunawhom, kapaċi jispiċċaw maqtula.

Għaddew ħames snin u hemm wisq ġurnalisti li għadhom qed jinqatlu fuq xogħolhom. Irrid insejjaħ lill-gvernijiet u lill-kollegi biex nagħrfu dan il-fatt.

Catch-the-eye procedure

Στέλιος Κυμπουρόπουλος (PPE). – Κυρία Πρόεδρε, συνάδελφοι, εδώ και καιρό, εξαιτίας κυρίως της έκθεσης της ΜΚΟ «Δημοσιογράφοι Χωρίς Σύνορα» έχει στηθεί μια συντονισμένη προσπάθεια δυσφήμισης της Ελλάδας. Για όποιον γνωρίζει την κατάσταση στη χώρα μου, το να κατατάσσεται στη θέση 108, κάτω ακόμη και από δικτατορικά καθεστώτα, μόνο γέλια μπορεί να προκαλέσει. Γι' αυτό οφείλουμε να το πούμε κατηγορηματικά: Δεν υφίσταται ζήτημα σχετικά με την ελευθερία του Τύπου στην Ελλάδα. Ο καθένας έχει το δικαίωμα να δημοσιεύσει ό,τι θέλει και αυτό αποδεικνύεται από την πληθώρα επικριτικών και, σε αρκετές περιπτώσεις, δυσφημιστικών άρθρων κατά της κυβέρνησης. Αντίθετα, οφείλουμε να αντιληφθούμε ότι διεξάγεται συντονισμένος επικοινωνιακός πόλεμος κατά της Ελλάδας, με διασπορά ψευδών ειδήσεων και παραπληροφόρησης, τα οποία όχι μόνο άκριτα υιοθετούν μερικοί αλλά δεν έχουν και τη δεοντολογία να απολογηθούν, όταν τα γραφόμενά τους διαψεύδονται. Αυτό οφείλουμε να κάνουμε και όχι να στοχοποιούμε χώρες με προωθημένη την πολυφωνία των μέσων ενημέρωσης και την ελευθερία του Τύπου, όπως η Ελλάδα.

Juan Fernando López Aguilar (S&D). – Señora presidenta, señor presidente en ejercicio del Consejo, señor comisario Hahn, el informe del Estado de Derecho, el tercero de este año 2022, acierta plenamente al recibir un punto subrayado por la Comisión LIBE: libertad de prensa y libertad de pluralismo en el contexto del Plan de Acción de la UE para los Derechos Humanos y la Democracia. Porque no hay libertad que no tenga como corolario el pluralismo.

Pero para asegurar el pluralismo hacen falta dos requisitos. El primero, transparencia en la propiedad de los medios y en la inversión en publicidad de esos medios. El segundo, asegurar a los periodistas frente a demandas truculentas para intimidarlos o querellas para meterles miedo —ya se llame Ignacio Cembrero, periodista español, o de cualquier otro Estado miembro— y, por supuesto, protegerles frente a atentados contra su vida. Hay una sala en este Parlamento Europeo que lleva el nombre de Daphne Caruana, pero no se habla tanto de Yorgos Karaivaz, un periodista griego igualmente asesinado en el año 2021.

Por tanto, dos iniciativas fundamentales: la legislativa, para proteger a los periodistas frente a la instigación intimidatoria, y la segunda, la Ley de Libertad de los Medios de Comunicación, para establecer estándares europeos de protección de la libertad de prensa y del pluralismo informativo.

Bogdan Rzońca (ECR). – Pani Przewodnicząca! Przysłuchiwałem się z ogromną ciekawością tej debacie. Ona jest bardzo potrzebna i jestem przekonany, że ochrona rzetelnych mediów jest jak najbardziej na miejscu. Także jestem za tym, żeby chronić niezależne dziennikarstwo. Wspominano jednakże kilkakrotnie tutaj o Polsce. Uważam, że są to bardzo krzywdzące opinie. W Polsce funkcjonują prywatne media z kapitałem niemieckim, prywatne telewizje, prywatne gazety. Nie ma żadnego problemu z pluralizmem medialnym w Polsce. Nie wiem, skąd i kto chciał pokazać jakieś przypadki tłamszenia wolności dziennikarskiej w Polsce, bo z największym skandalem w historii Polski mieliśmy miejsce, jak chodzi o prześladowanie mediów za rządów Donalda Tuska. Było to w czerwcu 2014 r., kiedy Agencja Bezpieczeństwa Wewnętrznego weszła do dziennika Wprost. Do dzisiaj ci dziennikarze żyją, pamiętają tamtą akcję. Zabrane zostały komputery, zamknięta została redakcja i kopiowane były dyski. I to jest największy skandal w historii Polski. A później pan Donald Tusk został przewodniczącym Rady Europejskiej.

Mick Wallace (The Left). – Madam President, you say that an independent free press is vital to any democracy, and I agree with you. But, sadly, so much of mainstream media across Europe today is either owned or controlled by vested interests. And that's a huge problem.

Big money controls most of our media, or people who have an agenda in how they shape the news. You also said that a journalist should not be punished for doing his work. I also agree 100% with that, but Julian Assange is in prison for over four years, and he was locked up in the Ecuadorian embassy for six years before that. And he is in prison because he spoke the truth. He exposed US NATO war crimes.

What have we done here to protect Julian Assange? What have we done to see that he gets freedom and that he is released from prison for telling the truth? I want to know what the EU Commission are actually doing in this area, because I think it's really, really important. It is the journalistic story of a generation, and we're doing very little by the looks of it.

Maria Walsh (PPE). – Madam President, we know that democratic values and freedom of speech are in retreat and, in some parts of our world and EU, in serious decline. It is essential that we as a European Union defend journalists as this is a means of defending democracy itself. And it is deeply concerning that in 2022 alone 63 journalists have been killed, 78 journalists are retained as hostages and 478 journalists are imprisoned. And that's just what we know of.

On the day that we as a Parliament have awarded the Sakharov Prize to the people of Ukraine, let me echo the words of President von der Leyen when she stated that one lesson from the Ukrainian war is that we should have listened to those who knew Putin best – to Anna Politkovskaya and all the Russian journalists who exposed the crimes and paid the ultimate price.

The EU must be guided by its founding values of freedom of expression and ensure the safety of journalists here in the EU and around the world.

(End of catch-the-eye procedure)

Johannes Hahn, *Member of the Commission*. – Madam President, Minister, honourable Members, thank you again for this debate. I think the debate showed that we are dealing with a very important, urgent and pressing issue. The Commission is determined to pursue the implementation of recommendations and adoption of its proposals, as I mentioned earlier today. We need these rules on the ground without any further delay.

Unfortunately, we see developments in the media world which raise really very serious concerns. Together with increasing threats to their physical and online safety, legal threats and abusive litigation adds to an environment where hostile activity against journalists is growing and can have a serious impact on their willingness and ability to continue their work.

With this in mind, I believe that this debate is very encouraging for all of us to continue the positive work, and I am sure we can count on your sustained support on this subject.

Mikuláš Bek, *President-in-Office of the Council*. – Madam President, Commission, honourable Members, the Council attaches great importance to the rule of law, the protection of journalists and the defence of media freedom.

We all need to step up our efforts to ensure and guarantee media freedom. This important debate confirmed that. It starts with us as co-legislators to make progress on the two legislative proposals which the Commission has recently put forward. I trust that we will be able to work constructively on those issues and I look forward to the upcoming negotiations.

These texts, together with other actions that we will take, will be crucial to ensure that our Union is a safe place for journalists where democracy thrives. We need it now more than ever during the troubled times that we are going through.

President. Commissioner, honourable Members, this was the very last intervention in my capacity as the representative of the Presidency of the Council of the European Union. I would like to thank you for all the exchanges of views we had and our cooperation on a number of issues. It has been a pleasure indeed. I thank you for your attention and wish you a merry Christmas.

President. – Thank you very much, Minister, and on behalf of the European Parliament, I want to take this occasion to thank the Czech Presidency for the very good cooperation with this House, with the European Parliament, over the last six months. We appreciate all the work done and we thank you.

The debate is closed.

Mittwoch, 14. Dezember 2022

15. Verstärkung des Mehrjährigen Finanzrahmens 2021-2027 (Aussprache)

President. – The next item is the debate on the report by Jan Olbrycht and Margarida Marques, on behalf of the Committee on Budgets, on upscaling the 2021-2027 multiannual financial framework: a resilient EU budget fit for new challenges (2022/2046(INI)) (A9-0281/2022).

Jan Olbrycht, *Rapporteur.* – Pani Przewodnicząca! Panie Ministrze! Panie Komisarzu! Pytanie, które dzisiaj sobie zadajemy, brzmi tak: dlaczego teraz, przed końcem roku 2022, uchwalamy tekst rezolucji w sprawie wieloletnich ram finansowych? Jaka jest przyczyna tego, że Parlament chce zdecydowanie prosić Komisję Europejską o przygotowanie propozycji rewizji, czyli zmiany wieloletniej perspektywy finansowej?

Zazwyczaj było tak do tej pory w doświadczeniach Parlamentu, że Parlament zgadzał się, po bardzo wielu trudnych rozmowach, na stosunkowo mniejszy budżet, zakładając, że w połowie perspektywy nastąpi jednak zmiana i że Parlament wtedy upomni się o pewne wydatki. Sytuacja dzisiaj jest zupełnie inna. Sytuacja jest dlatego inna, ponieważ warunki, które nas otaczają powodują, że zadajemy sobie pytania, czy ten budżet jest przygotowany na nowe wyzwania. Czy jesteśmy w stanie pokryć wydatki na rzeczy, które są najpilniejsze, dotyczące COVID-u, dotyczące wojny? Czy ten budżet jest właściwie skonstruowany? Czy mamy wystarczającą ilość funduszy? A równocześnie mamy nowe propozycje, nowe programy, nowe inicjatywy, które przecież kosztują.

Parlament Europejski mówi: nie wystarczy nam przegląd, nie wystarczy nam *review*. Musi być zmiana, ponieważ ten budżet trzeba zmienić. To nie chodzi tylko o to, żeby dać więcej pieniędzy. Chodzi o to, żeby ten budżet zmienić w taki sposób, żeby on był w stanie reagować szybko na pewne najnowsze wyzwania, żeby mógł reagować, żeby mógł odpowiadać na nowe trudności. My z jednej strony wskazujemy, gdzie są braki, gdzie naprawdę brakuje pieniędzy, a równocześnie proponujemy, co należy zrobić, w jaki sposób do tego podejść, w jaki sposób znaleźć rozwiązania, również przy przebudowie funkcjonowania budżetu.

Bardzo liczymy na współpracę Komisji Europejskiej. I nawet jeżeli wszyscy dzisiaj powtarzają, że nie będzie żadnej rewizji, to przecież padają propozycje jednak rewizji. Dopiero co przeprowadzaliśmy zmianę wieloletniej perspektywy finansowej dotyczącej pomocy makroekonomicznej dla Ukrainy. To przecież była mała rewizja wieloletniej perspektywy finansowej. Dzisiaj na tej sali pani przewodnicząca Komisji Europejskiej mówiła o zapowiedziach nowego funduszu, Funduszu Suwerenności, że pojawią się niedługo propozycje. Jak będzie ten fundusz, co trzeba będzie zrobić? Trzeba będzie zmienić wieloletnie perspektywy finansowe. Inaczej mówiąc – wiemy, że trzeba będzie zmienić. Politycznie jest to bardzo trudna decyzja.

Parlament dzisiaj w rezolucji mówi: oczekujemy od Komisji bardzo pilnego działania. Oczekujemy, że Komisja przedstawi swoją propozycję zmiany w pierwszym kwartale roku 2023. Czas ucieka. Ten budżet naprawdę trzeba zmienić. Wieloletnia perspektywa wymaga rewizji. My mówimy, w jaki sposób chcielibyśmy to zrobić, gdzie należy szukać środków, w jaki sposób podejść do nowych źródeł dochodów w Unii Europejskiej. A więc czas na działanie. A na razie, Panie Komisarzu, przedkładamy rezolucję, a w niej oczekujemy od Komisji pilnego działania.

Margarida Marques, *Rapporteur.* – Senhora Presidente, Presidente, Senhor Comissário, dois anos após a sua entrada em vigor, o Quadro Financeiro Plurianual 2021-2027 no pilar da gestão centralizada foi levado até ao limite da sua disponibilidade orçamental. E isto, tendo ao lado o NextGenerationEU, que também tem permitido reagir aos efeitos económicos e sociais da pandemia.

Desafios inesperados chegaram ao orçamento da União Europeia: o apoio à Ucrânia, nas suas diferentes dimensões, o apoio às pessoas e às empresas para mitigar as consequências económicas e sociais da guerra, o impacto dos preços da energia, dos bens alimentares ou o efeito da inflação crescente.

Funcionou, tem funcionado o princípio da flexibilidade, mas já percebemos que o uso da flexibilidade é insuficiente. Registo aqui a força e a vontade política do Parlamento Europeu, enquanto autoridade orçamental, tomando decisões em tempo recorde para que os europeus tenham os apoios necessários da União Europeia. Das vacinas ao apoio aos refugiados ucranianos, ou apoiando o financiamento em 18 mil milhões de euros para o funcionamento do Estado ucraniano, para que possa assegurar os serviços mínimos aos cidadãos.

É hoje evidente que a arquitetura do Quadro Financeiro Plurianual não está ajustada à pressão a que é sujeito, nem ao calendário macroeconómico atual. O atual QFP, tal como está, não está equipado para financiar políticas emergentes, como a transição climática e o respeito pelo Acordo de Paris, a cooperação acrescida em matéria de defesa, a criação de um fundo soberano para o reforço da autonomia estratégica da União Europeia, a construção da autonomia energética, onde o REPowerEU tem de se tornar um instrumento-chave, a implementação do Regulamento Circuitos Integrados, o Fundo Social para o Clima, que, sim, deve estar dentro do orçamento da União Europeia.

Por isso, precisamos de um quadro financeiro plurianual revisto. Por isso, precisamos de passar de soluções pontuais para soluções estruturais na arquitetura do orçamento. Precisamos, do lado da receita, que os novos recursos próprios acordados em 2020 entrem no orçamento da União, no calendário aprovado.

Para que o orçamento da União possa reagir rapidamente às crises e aos seus efeitos sociais e económicos, propomos a criação de um instrumento permanente que possa ser ativado sempre que necessário. Por isso, precisamos que a Comissão proponha um instrumento permanente dentro do QFP e esperamos, Senhor Comissário, que seja esse o seu legado para o futuro do orçamento da União.

Comissário HAHN, o Parlamento Europeu não quer continuar a assistir à criação de instrumentos financeiros fora do orçamento da União Europeia, em que o Parlamento viu o seu poder de autoridade orçamental reduzido. Assim se criou o Mecanismo Europeu de Estabilidade em 2012 e, fora do âmbito comunitário e mais recentemente, o NextGenerationEU. Chega de recorrer ao artigo 122.º! Também não queremos um financiamento fora do orçamento da União, via recursos externos, queremos mais transparência, mais responsabilidade democrática. Também não queremos que a política de coesão seja continuadamente usada como um mecanismo de resposta à crise, como teve que ser agora, e bem, porque não havia outra solução para compensar as deficiências na flexibilidade orçamental. Não! A política de coesão não é um instrumento de crises, é a política de investimento da União Europeia e tem de continuar a sê-lo.

Comissário HAHN, como sempre, terá do Parlamento Europeu todo o apoio para tornar o orçamento da União Europeia mais eficaz e mais efetivo para sustentar a ambição política da União Europeia.

Johannes Hahn, *Member of the Commission*. – Madam President, honourable Members, but in particular the rapporteurs, the Commission really welcomes, and I in particular welcome, the debate on the Parliament's own initiative report on upscaling the current multiannual financial framework: a resilient EU budget fit for new challenges. I am looking forward to exchange constructive ideas with you today, but not only today, but in the next couple of weeks and probably months.

Let me start by acknowledging the work of the co-rapporteurs of the draft report, Ms Marques and Mr Olbrycht, in particular on the assessment of the new pressures to the Union budget and on the important role of flexibility measures to respond to crises.

In the letter of intent on 14 September this year, President von der Leyen confirmed that the Commission will present a mid-term review of the current MFF in 2023, meaning earlier than the original 2024 date that the Commission had included in its 2020 declaration.

As you know, carrying out such a review is a voluntary initiative of the Commission, not a legal obligation. The commitment for an MFF review is not a commitment to propose a revision, and at this stage it's too early to speculate or foresee any such initiative. We will need to assess our options carefully, bearing in mind that the long-term budget agreed in 2020 lasts until 2027. It must be able to support the Union's priorities and react to new challenges over the next 4 to 5 years.

The Union budget has always been a key instrument to support the Union in delivering on its policy agenda and investing in projects that No Member State can implement as efficiently and effectively on its own. Since the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Union budget has served as one of Europe's key crisis response tools.

Nevertheless, we cannot ignore that since the adoption of the current MFF and NextGenerationEU in December 2020, new and unexpected challenges, and in particular Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine and its fallout within and outside the Union, have been bringing significant pressure on the Union budget. Furthermore, the macroeconomic environment is also more challenging amid rising inflation and interest rates. We are all acutely aware how these developments affect the finances and how difficult it has been to reach an agreement on the annual budget for next year.

The questions underpinning the review will in large part have to take into account the new challenges as well as the implementation so far. Finding a strong and common response in this challenging environment requires deep reflection about the future of the Union budget and our joint efforts as Europeans.

The Commission will carefully assess the sustainability of the expenditure ceilings and subceilings of the current MFF, because the Union budget must continue enabling us to deliver on our policy priorities. We must also factor in our joint commitment on the repayment of NextGenerationEU and our ambitions about the new own resources.

Let me conclude by stressing again that the Commission looks forward to the ideas of the European Parliament in their own-initiative report, and we also take note of the planned own-initiative report on own resources that this committee is preparing for the beginning of next year. Both reports will be timely and important input to the reflection of the mid-term review of the MFF, and I am already today grateful for your constant and permanent support in our joint efforts to develop and to agree, hopefully, on an adapted Union budget which indeed addresses the needs we are facing in the near future.

Michael Gahler, *Verfasser der Stellungnahme des mitberatenden Ausschusses für auswärtige Angelegenheiten*. – Frau Präsidentin, liebe Kolleginnen und Kollegen! Ja, ich spreche hier für den Ausschuss für auswärtige Angelegenheiten, und das ist einer der Politikbereiche, wo es ganz offensichtlich ist, dass es vorne und hinten nicht reicht.

Herr Kommissar, schön, dass Sie da sind. Ich hätte mir gewünscht, dass vom Rat auch jemand da wäre, denn die müssen da auch zuhören, und ich hoffe, das wird denen auch hinterbracht. Wir müssen uns ehrlich machen. So sehr ich als Ukraine-Berichterstatter froh bin, dass man im Bereich der *Peace Facility* außerhalb des Haushalts jetzt offenbar etwas drauf legt, können wir es im Parlament nicht als Prinzip akzeptieren, dass angesichts der neuen Herausforderungen hier außerhalb des Haushalts Dinge veranstaltet werden. Als der Finanzrahmen verabschiedet wurde, da hatten wir weder Corona noch den verbrecherischen russischen Angriffskrieg. Wenn wir jetzt Corona und den verbrecherischen Krieg hatten und haben, dann müssen wir darauf reagieren, und zwar innerhalb der institutionellen Verantwortlichkeiten.

Dann sage ich als Abgeordneter: Alles das, was wir mehr brauchen, muss sich auch im Haushalt wiederfinden. Deswegen ist die Debatte, die wir hier anstoßen, eine notwendige. Ich hoffe, dass die Kommission auch den Mut findet, dann sich dem anzuschließen.

Charles Goerens, *rapporteur pour avis de la commission du développement*. – Madame la Présidente, le Parlement européen ne cesse de réclamer une révision à mi-parcours de l'actuelle période de financement de l'Union. En matière de planification budgétaire, il importe de se projeter sur le moyen terme et le long terme – c'est une évidence.

J'ai déjà eu l'occasion de dire, dans une intervention précédente, que le regard que porteront nos collègues en 2040 sur ce que nous faisons aujourd'hui dans ce domaine est ce qui compte vraiment. Les Ukrainiens – mais pas seulement eux, les pays en développement aussi, ceux qui sont tributaires de notre concours et qui souffrent énormément du télescopage des crises qui ne cessent de nous secouer depuis 2008 — pourront juger alors du degré de pertinence de nos choix politiques et budgétaires, et verront si nous avons été à la hauteur. On verra si nous avons été à même de défendre nos libertés et de reconstruire un ordre international fondé sur le droit, ou si nous avons laissé des pays frugaux avoir raison des choix qui s'imposent en ce moment.

Petri Sarvamaa, *rapporteur for the opinion of the Committee on Budgetary Control*. –Madam President, honourable Vice-President, Commissioner, over the past few years we have faced several crises to which we have had to react quickly with various financial instruments.

This has indeed been necessary, but I would also like to use this opportunity to remind about the importance of economic balance in the long run. The Member States of the Union have significantly increased their borrowing, and the EU's attitude towards debt has also been very compassionate, I would say.

In the meanwhile it seems we have forgotten to have a serious debate about economic discipline and its significance. As Commission President Ms von der Leyen has also said in this Chamber, stability and growth can only go hand in hand. This basic principle must also be borne in mind when the Commission carries out a mid-term review of the MFF.

And not to forget that we must stop expanding the so-called 'budgetary galaxy' which has, among other things, limited the possibilities for the Parliament to monitor the use of EU funds.

Dragoș Pîslaru, *rapporteur for the opinion of the Committee on Employment and Social Affairs.* – Madam President, dear Commissioner Hahn, the challenges that we have faced since the adoption of the MFF 2021 to 2027 place us in a completely changed social, economic and political context. It is clear that we need to look at a very different scale for flexibility, as well as the resources needed to navigate through these challenging times.

Today, just to browse some data, 96.5 million people in the EU are the risk of poverty and social exclusion, which represents a staggering 21.9% of the population. Imagine: one in five Europeans is suffering at the edge of poverty in this multiple crisis that we are having today – energy, inflation, and a potential economic crisis as well.

These numbers will grow at the same pace as inflation and food and energy prices increase across the EU. On behalf of the Employment and Social Affairs Committee, we would like to have an urgent increase of European Child Guarantee funding through a dedicated budget of at least EUR 20 billion for the period 2021-2027. This needs to be at the core of the revised MFF and reinforced ESF+. This means we have to provide higher public and social investment. We need to be more ambitious than initially planned.

Isabel García Muñoz, *ponente de opinión de la Comisión de Transportes y Turismo.* – Señora presidenta, señor comisario, como ponente de la Comisión de Transportes y Turismo para este informe me gustaría destacar que los dos hitos principales que condicionan esta revisión ponen todavía más en evidencia el valor de invertir en movilidad y en infraestructuras en la Unión Europea.

La COVID-19 y la guerra en Ucrania han tenido un impacto incalculable en los sistemas de transporte y de turismo europeos, sectores que contribuyen, y mucho, a la economía y a la creación de empleo en Europa. El presupuesto del Mecanismo «Conectar Europa» 2021-2027, que ya era insuficiente, no puede abarcar las nuevas necesidades de transporte. El nuevo contexto geopolítico y la urgencia de acelerar la independencia energética y la descarbonización del transporte requieren más fondos europeos.

El Consejo no supo entender el valor añadido de invertir en movilidad dual. Hemos visto que adaptar las redes de transporte a un uso de defensa beneficia al uso civil y que, además, facilitaría el transporte de material humanitario y del grano de Ucrania a través de los corredores solidarios.

No me olvido del sector del turismo, que también se ha visto muy afectado en los últimos años y para el que volvemos a insistir en contar con un presupuesto específico europeo.

Victor Negrescu, *rapporteur for the opinion of the Committee on Culture and Education.* – Madam President, dear Commissioner, dear colleagues, the current challenges require concrete measures – including, of course, the revision and upscaling of the multiannual financial framework. We need a budget that offers solutions to the current needs that enables us to manage the different crises, including inflation, the energy crises and social and regional disparities. We call, of course, for more flexibility in the annual EU budgeting, new own resources, but also to become more efficient in the use of available funds.

We have to make sure that the current EU programmes are functioning properly, so therefore beneficiaries of EU funds from programmes like Erasmus+, the Active Europe Programme or the European Solidarity Corps, but also from structural funds, are waiting for us to provide the solutions to continue to implement their projects.

Today, it is more difficult than ever for students to go on Erasmus mobility. It is complicated for an artist to implement a cultural programme or for NGOs, social partners and local authorities to co-finance their projects.

We must also focus resources on the actions that directly help EU citizens to deal with the increases of living costs, to upskill and to get access to quality education and health services.

We need to be fair and open about what needs to happen. Transparency and fighting against corruption are key elements. No more 'frugals' versus 'cohesion countries'. It is about all of us getting through the current crisis together and not leaving anyone behind.

I am glad the European Parliament thinks ahead and plans for the MFF revision.

José Manuel Fernandes, *em nome do Grupo PPE*. – Senhora Presidente, Caras e Caros Colegas, Senhor Comissário, a revisão do orçamento plurianual é uma urgência, é uma evidência. Aliás, a Comissão Europeia, com as suas propostas para o REPowerEU, para a conectividade segura, os semicondutores, a proposta de um fundo soberano para reforçar a autonomia estratégica, veio demonstrar que está a mudar o quadro financeiro plurianual, está a fazer cortes em alguns programas e está a fazer reafetações.

Portanto, é evidente para todos que é necessário mudar, rever, reforçar o quadro financeiro plurianual. Uma evidência que é uma urgência, como eu referi. Aquilo que é necessário fazer é reforçar os programas europeus na área da saúde, do digital, da energia, da segurança, da defesa. Se não o fizermos, vamos pagar caro. Aliás, vemos o que a União Europeia paga pelo facto de não ter uma união da energia.

Para tudo isto, também precisamos de recursos próprios, de novas receitas que não prejudiquem e que ajudem a termos novos recursos *(a Presidente retira a palavra ao orador)*.

Juozas Olekas, *Žemės ūkio komiteto nuomonės referentas*. – Ačiū, Pirmininke. Komisijos nare, mieli kolegos. Pirmiausia noriu pasveikinti Parlamento iniciatyvą peržiūrėti daugiametę finansinę perspektyvą. Pastarųjų metų įvykiai pakeitė mūsų pasaulį ir anksčiau priimtus sprendimus tikslinga koreguoti. Ypač svarbu užtikrinti apsirūpinimą maistu ir Europos savarankiškumą šioje srityje. Putino Rusijos karas prieš Ukrainą sukėlė rimtą pavojų maisto tiekimo sistemoms. Kitas labai svarbus aspektas mūsų kova su klimato kaita. Paketas „Fit For 55" turėtų būti susietas su daugiamete finansine perspektyva. Biudžetą peržiūrėti taip pat reikia ir dėl sparčiai kylančių kainų. Reikia ypač atsižvelgti į jaunų ir smulkių ūkininkų padėtį. Karas didžiausią poveikį turi toms šalims, kurios yra netoli fronto linijos. O ūkininkų gebėjimui užtikrinti aprūpinimą maistu didelę įtaką turi bendrosios žemės ūkio politikos išmokų skirtumai. Rytuose esančios valstybės narės, kurių ūkininkai gauna mažiausias išmokas, patiria didžiausią spaudimą dėl karo Ukrainoje. Turėtume parodyti Europinį solidarumą ir įvykdyti senus pažadus: užtikrinti mūsų Rytų Europos ūkininkams tiesioginių išmokų vidurkį.

Nils Ušakovs, *on behalf of the S&D Group*. – Madam President, Commissioner, dear Colleagues, the Latvian media recently reported about a renovation project of a leading hospital in Riga that will be financed by Next Generation EU. EUR 37 million are planned to be spent on full reconstruction of historical premises, as well as buying heavily needed modern medical equipment.

Spending European money to upgrade a hospital in order to cope with the crisis resulting from a pandemic, that is a fantastic example of a European programme that is both highly demanded and effectively implemented. But we are already facing a new crisis which is incomparable in its magnitude and social consequence neither to the pandemic nor any other crisis of the last decades.

This time we will have to provide direct support to our citizens and help them to pay for heating, but also to buy food. Hospital renovation will look like a luxury type of support, comparing to much greater challenges we will be facing in the next years.

It's not a question of social solidarity or fairness only, it's a question of avoiding widening the dangerous gap between the East and West European Union. The western part of the EU has much higher capacities to provide help to its citizens, while in the eastern part, people literally will have to choose either paying for their heating or for their food.

This winter, like in my home country, Latvia, we need to upscale the MFF to the levels that will allow us to establish Next Generation EU 2.0 and help Europeans directly.

Valérie Hayer, *au nom du groupe Renew*. – Madame la Présidente. Monsieur le Commissaire, chers collègues, s'il y a bien une leçon que nous retenons de la guerre russe en Ukraine, c'est que nos dépendances sont nos faiblesses. L'énergie en est une. Les puces, les batteries, les matières premières, les panneaux photovoltaïques et les produits chimiques en sont d'autres. Or, ces dépendances nous coûtent un peu plus chaque jour.

La réalité, chers collègues, est la suivante: Northvolt, groupe suédois spécialisé dans les batteries, l'espagnol Iberdrola, qui figure parmi les plus grandes sociétés d'énergie au monde, le français Safran, l'un des principaux fournisseurs de moteurs d'avion, ou encore le géant de la chimie allemand BASF sont tous en train d'annoncer en cascade leur volonté de rediriger leurs investissements vers les États-Unis.

La réalité, chers collègues, est que notre tissu industriel se déchire. Il se déchire à cause des prix de l'énergie, qui sont bien sûr le résultat de notre naïveté énergétique, qui a mené à notre dépendance aux hydrocarbures puisés dans l'Oural. Notre tissu industriel se déchire aussi à cause de notre incapacité à faire jeu égal avec les grands de ce monde: avec les États-Unis, qui lancent un grand plan de subventions, et avec la Chine, qui surprotège ses entreprises.

J'ai donc une question pour tous ceux qui sont ici dans cet hémicycle: quand va-t-on sortir de notre naïveté? Quand va-t-on reconnaître que ce n'est pas en appliquant de nouveau, encore et encore, les mêmes vieilles recettes ayant mené à nos dépendances que nous rendrons l'Europe plus forte, plus à même de faire croître ses entreprises, mais surtout plus à même de garder ses entreprises chez nous?

Monsieur le Commissaire, proposez-nous une révision ambitieuse de ce cadre financier pluriannuel; proposez-nous ce fonds de souveraineté; mais, je vous en conjure, munissez-le de véritables moyens, parce que d'énièmes redéploiements ne duperont personne, ni nos entrepreneurs, ni nos investisseurs.

Rasmus Andresen, *im Namen der Verts/ALE-Fraktion*. – Frau Präsidentin! Mit diesem Haushalt ist die EU nicht zukunftsfähig. Deshalb brauchen wir jetzt ein Update. Klimaneutralität bis 2050, die sozialen Folgen der Wirtschaftskrise, mehr sicherheitspolitische Verantwortung, der industriepolitische Wettbewerb mit den USA und China, aktive Partnerschaften auf dem Balkan und dem afrikanischen Kontinent, die Digitalisierung, das Artensterben – die Herausforderungen sind groß.

Die Antworten auf die großen Fragen müssen europäisch sein. Deshalb ist es an der Zeit, aus Sonntagsreden konkrete und in Zahlen gegossene Politik zu machen. Wir brauchen eine Revision des Finanzrahmens, um gemeinsame europäische Prioritäten auskömmlich zu finanzieren.

Aber es geht nicht einfach nur um mehr Geld. Es geht auch um die Qualität der Ausgaben. Noch immer wird viel zu viel europäisches Geld klimaschädlich ausgegeben. Durch unseren EU-Haushalt tragen wir dazu bei, dass klimaschädliche Infrastruktur gefördert wird und das Artensterben voranschreitet. Wir müssen unsere Klimaquoten verbindlicher machen, Nichteinhaltung muss stärkere Konsequenzen haben, und wir müssen klimaschädliche Subventionen aus dem Haushalt streichen. Deshalb haben wir gemeinsam mit den Liberalen zu dem heutigen Bericht konkrete Änderungsvorschläge vorgelegt.

Mein Appell soll in den letzten Stunden vor der Abstimmung vor allem an die sozialdemokratischen Kolleginnen und Kollegen hier im Haus gehen: Sie sind das Zünglein an der Waage. Stimmen Sie morgen für unsere Änderungsanträge, stimmen Sie für eine bessere Klimafinanzierung, machen Sie mit uns den Haushalt klimakonform!

Joachim Kuhs, *im Namen der ID-Fraktion*. – Frau Präsidentin, Herr Kommissar, werte Kollegen! Erst vor Kurzem habe ich hier prophezeit, dass der Haushalt 2023 nicht zukunftsfähig sei und bald platzen werde.

Heute kann ich dies wiederholen, denn heute wollen Sie den Siebenjahresplan wieder neu justieren, indem Sie diesen riesigen Ball weiter mit Geld aufpumpen, und zwar mit Geld, das Sie noch nicht haben und vermutlich auch niemals in der erforderlichen Höhe mit den geplanten Eigenmitteln einnehmen werden. Und dann passiert im nächsten Jahr exakt das Gleiche wieder.

Liebe Kollegen, dabei sollten wir uns heute doch auf Weihnachten freuen und das Kommen des Erlösers in die Finsternis dieser Welt feiern. Ich wünsche Ihnen deshalb – trotz all dieser kriminellen Ereignisse derzeit – eine fröhliche und gnadenbringende Weihnacht.

Und nicht vergessen: Die Schätze der Weisen aus dem Morgenland, die sind völlig unbedenklich. Sie dienten nicht der Bestechung wie bei den Königen von Katar, sondern der Würdigung des neugeborenen Königs. Mögen auch Sie sich an allen Geschenken, die sie zur Weihnachtszeit bekommen, von Herzen und ohne Reue freuen können.

Bogdan Rzońca, *w imieniu grupy ECR*. – Pani Przewodnicząca! Panie Komisarzu! Szanowni Państwo! Polepszenie wieloletnich ram finansowych – tak. Łamanie traktatów – nie. Oczywiście popieramy każde działanie, które przyniesie ulgę walczącemu narodowi ukraińskiemu. Z tym się zgadzamy. Chcemy także pamiętać o tym, że należne jest wsparcie państwom członkowskim, które pomagają uchodźcom uciekającym przed wojną na Ukrainie do różnych krajów. Trzeba to zauważyć w budżecie Unii Europejskiej.

Należy również pozytywnie ocenić decyzję o przyznaniu Ukrainie i Mołdawii statusu krajów kandydujących. Popieramy to. Ponadto zgadzamy się, że rola budżetu Unii jako gwaranta dodatkowej pomocy makrofinansowej dla Ukrainy jest niezbędna. To też popieramy. Musimy jednak zaapelować, by nowe inicjatywy polityczne były finansowane za pomocą świeżych środków bez szkody dla wcześniej istniejących programów lub polityk unijnych, a nowe zasoby nie mogą mieć charakteru agresywnego. A tak się może zadziać, bo słyszymy, że pewne kraje na skutek nowych pomysłów podatkowych stracą swoje dochody, tak jak Polska. My możemy po prostu na tych nowych pomysłach dużo stracić.

Nie możemy też absolutnie zgodzić się z odejściem od jednomyślności na rzecz głosowania większością kwalifikowaną podczas przyjmowania rozporządzenia w sprawie wieloletnich ram finansowych. Taki pomysł bardzo psuje solidarnościową politykę państw unijnych i wzajemne zaufanie. Narzucanie głosowania większością kwalifikowaną niesie za sobą ryzyko pogłębiania różnic między państwami członkowskimi. Więksi będą ważniejsi, mniejsi będą tłamszeni. Tego bardzo się obawiamy. To jest kardynalna zmiana i na nią się nie chcemy zgodzić. A więc zróbmy wszystko, żeby nie niszczyć jedności Unii Europejskiej.

Younous Omarjee, *au nom du groupe The Left*. – Madame la Présidente, il y a deux ans, quand les États membres se sont mis d'accord sur le budget, c'était avant la guerre d'Ukraine. C'était avant les crises humanitaire, sociale, économique, migratoire et énergétique qui en ont découlé. C'était avant la terrible inflation.

Aujourd'hui, les crises sont là. Elles se combinent et elles s'inscrivent dans la durée. Elles sont un véritable défi pour se donner la capacité budgétaire de mieux faire face aux accidents de l'histoire, tout en gardant le cap des ambitions stratégiques de cohésion, de réindustrialisation, de transition énergétique et de lutte contre la pauvreté.

La solution, en réalité, nous la connaissons: c'est un grand budget européen, avec de grandes ressources fiscales propres et plus d'autonomie par rapport aux États. La taxe sur les transactions financières représente à elle seule 50 milliards d'euros de plus. Nous devons aujourd'hui la mettre en place, sans tarder.

Puhetta johti HEIDI HAUTALA

varapuhemies

Andor Deli (NI). – Elnök Asszony! A jelentés célja a 2021-27-es pénzügyi keret felülvizsgálata, ugyanakkor még meg sem kezdődött a lényegi végrehajtása. Az új közös agrárpolitika csak 2023-tól indul, az új kohéziós forrásokból még semmit, a helyreállítási forrásokból pedig csak 136 milliárd eurót fizetett ki az Unió. Ebben a helyzetben, amikor még nincsenek értékelhető eredmények, nem megalapozott felülvizsgálatot követelni. Nézzük például a kohéziós eszközöket. Mindjárt 2023 van, mégis, még az előző, 2014-20-as időszak kifizetéseinél tartunk. Az új partnerségi megállapodások megkötése nagyon lassan haladt, és örülhetünk, ha a jövő év első felében legalább az előlegek kifizetésére sor kerül.

Felvetődik tehát a kérdés, hogy miért nem jutnak a tagállamok az őket megillető uniós forrásokhoz? A válasz: a felesleges adminisztratív terhek, politikai alapú jogállamisági zsarolás, túlzó, a kifizetéseket megnehezítő feltételrendszerek. Ezek lebontásán kellene inkább dolgozni. Nincs vesztegetni való időnk! Az új gazdasági válságot látva elengedhetetlen, hogy a tagállamok mihamarabb hozzájussanak az őket megillető forrásokhoz.

Siegfried Mureşan (PPE). – Madam President, Commissioner, dear colleagues, when we adopted the Multiannual Financial Framework 2021-2027, we adopted it together with Next Generation EU. Next Generation EU and the budget together allow for more spending, more investments than ever at the level of the European Union.

But these two together are bigger than previous budgets. But, because of Next Generation EU, we decided to cut the budget narrower than before, and there are areas in the budget where the funding is insufficient simply because the budget, the headings, the lines are smaller than before.

Of course, it would be wrong to always ask for bigger budgets, like it is also wrong to always ask for smaller budgets. The right thing to do for us now in the context of the revision of the Multiannual Financial Framework is to look concretely where we can improve things, where we can do better. And one proposal is the following: in the budget we have included the repayment of the interest rate for Next Generation EU.

We do not know exactly how much interest rate we will have to pay in each year, and including that inside the ceilings of the Multiannual Financial Framework means that we have an amount there which can grow and, if it grows, it becomes a risk for priorities of the budget and it also becomes a risk for our capacity to react in situations of crisis.

The more we spend for interest rates inside the budget, the more we have for our real priorities, for our real policies and for helping people in need in times of crisis. And this is why I would like to reiterate what already is an official position of the Parliament to have the repayment of Next Generation EU interest payments outside the ceilings of the budget.

Other than that, of course, we have to make sure that we allow for more flexibility in the context of this revision and that we really look at those lines in which we had unexpected crises, foreign policy, migration, borders, where the money that we provided is not enough,

Concrete solutions for concrete problems, this is what we demand.

Pierre Larrouturou (S&D). – Madame la Présidente, chers amis, nous sommes face à deux crises qui peuvent avoir des conséquences catastrophiques si nos politiques et notre budget, notre CFP, ne sont pas à la hauteur.

La première crise est la flambée des prix liée à la guerre en Ukraine. Ce soir, des millions de citoyennes et de citoyens vont avoir froid en rentrant chez elles et chez eux. Des millions de nos amis auront froid. Des millions de femmes et d'hommes doivent choisir tous les jours entre chauffer normalement la maison et faire les courses normalement pour nourrir la famille. Si le prix de l'énergie reste trop élevé trop longtemps, on risque des délocalisations catastrophiques.

L'autre crise est le dérèglement climatique. En 2022, les canicules, les incendies, les feux de forêt et les inondations ont fait des dizaines de milliers de morts à travers le monde.

Le point commun à ces deux crises est le besoin d'argent et de budget. Pour faire face aux conséquences de la guerre en Ukraine, les États-Unis ont mis 400 milliards de subventions sur la table pour la loi sur la réduction de l'inflation. Et nous, ne pourrions-nous pas faire pareil, pour aider toutes les familles et toutes les entreprises qui en ont besoin et pour financer enfin une autonomie stratégique de l'Europe?

Beaucoup de pays ne sont pas d'accord pour un plan européen et bloquent en disant que l'on ne sait pas comment rembourser Next Generation, le plan qu'on a adopté pour faire face à la COVID-19. Bonne nouvelle, le Parlement européen propose des solutions pour les trois problèmes: si l'on crée enfin la taxe sur la spéculation, que le Parlement demande depuis des années, on pourrait avoir 57 milliards chaque année.

Or, si l'on a 57 milliards chaque année, on peut rembourser Next Generation – 12 milliards chaque année pendant trente ans. On peut financer un plan de lutte contre l'inflation et financer un plan pour le climat – 37 milliards chaque année. Mes amis, il est urgent de fixer la taxe sur la spéculation. *(La Présidente interrompt l'orateur)*

President. - Excuse me, colleague, I am obliged to tell you that presentations are not allowed in plenary. It's not personal, it's in the Rules.

Pierre Larrouturou (S&D). – Je continue en disant: mes amis, il n'est pas nécessaire d'avoir l'unanimité, il suffit d'une coopération renforcée pour créer la taxe sur la spéculation, qui donnerait 57 milliards chaque année et nous permettrait d'éviter le chaos social et le chaos climatique. Je ne sais donc pas ce que l'on attend.

Puhemies. – Todellakin meillä on siis säännöissä pykälä, jonka mukaan täällä ei saa esittää *(sanat eivät kuulu)* … ei sallita eikä myöskään, niin kuin muistatte, lippuja ja bannereita. Tämä liittyy siihen samaan asiaan.

Nicolae Ștefănuță (Renew). – *(începutul intervenției nu a fost făcut la microfon)* … crize ale cetățenilor europeni. Putem veni cu tot felul de legislație, de propuneri, dar dacă nu punem banii să le facem, e degeaba. Cetățenii așteaptă rezultate, nu vorbe. Și știm care sunt problemele structurale, le-a spus și domnul Siegfried Mureșan. Acestea sunt rezerve microscopice. Avem costurile dobânzilor în bugetul Uniunii Europene. Avem înlocuirea metodei comunitare cu metoda interguvernamentală, care este un pericol pentru noi, pentru Uniunea Europeană.

Am văzut că bugetul este în criză încă de la începutul acestui an. Când am început să muncesc ca raportor pentru 2023, am fost primul care a spus că bugetul pentru șapte ani trebuie redeschis și renegociat. Pentru că am observat de la început că nu avem bani necesari pentru energie, nu avem pentru Moldova, nu avem pentru Ucraina atât cât ne trebuie. Cadrul financiar trebuie redeschis cât mai repede posibil în primul trimestru al anului 2023, așa încât să ridicăm plafoanele acestui buget, așa încât să dăm un răspuns așteptărilor cetățenilor.

Înainte de a ține o predică oamenilor, Isus Hristos le-a spus ucenicilor să hrănească mulțimile înfometate. Deci, nu putem vorbi cu mintea și sufletul oamenilor despre valori până nu le răspundem priorităților. Crăciun fericit și vă aștept la anul cu răspunsuri.

Alexandra Geese (Verts/ALE). – Madam President, Commissioner, colleagues, every study shows that women work more than men, but they have a lower income – and that's called the gender pay gap.

In the same way, we have a public budget gender pay gap, and in order to measure that gap and to find out what causes this, we agreed in the MFF on finding a methodology to measure the impact of the MFF expenditure on gender equality. But the method the Commission is coming up with now does not draw an accurate picture because it doesn't take into account any negative impact that major programmes might have.

We should be learning the lesson from NextGenerationEU where we have some nice wording on gender equality in the regulation, but we are finding out now that from 70% to 80% of that expenditure goes to one gender and that's not the gender that has been hardest hit by the COVID crisis – women. The result is that NextGenerationEU might even increase the gender pay gap.

So we expect strong action on gender equality in the MFF review, and we expect that from a Commission President who represents European women more than any of her predecessors.

Matteo Adinolfi (ID). – Signora Presidente, signor Commissario, onorevoli colleghi, l'attuale quadro finanziario pluriennale è sottoposto a forti tensioni a causa delle molteplici crisi che l'Unione europea sta affrontando, in particolare la guerra in Ucraina e gli effetti che ha scatenato.

Con i fondi e le misure di flessibilità già ampiamente utilizzati e un'inflazione elevata, è auspicabile una revisione urgente del quadro finanziario pluriennale.

È altresì necessario che la Commissione continui il suo lavoro con gli Stati membri, anche attraverso l'assistenza tecnica, per aumentare la loro capacità di utilizzo dei fondi senza compromettere la qualità dei progetti ed evitarne l'uso improprio e le relative frodi.

La Commissione dovrebbe poi assicurare che l'Ufficio europeo per la lotta antifrode, la Corte dei conti e la Procura europea dispongano dei mezzi e del personale necessari per indagare su potenziali casi di frode a danno del bilancio comunitario.

Alla luce dello scandalo emerso in questi giorni, al fine di tutelare l'immagine di questa istituzione e soprattutto del lavoro svolto quotidianamente da noi deputati, è necessario garantire la massima trasparenza e responsabilità sugli strumenti di finanziamento comunitario. Lo dobbiamo ai cittadini europei.

Zbigniew Kuźmiuk (ECR). – Pani Przewodnicząca! Panie Komisarzu! Obecne ramy finansowe były tworzone na długo przed epidemią COVID-19 i jej skutkami, na długo przed wojną w Ukrainie, na długo przed podwyższoną inflacją czy destabilizacją rynków surowców energetycznych, ze wszystkimi tego negatywnymi konsekwencjami. Nie ulega więc wątpliwości, że potrzebna jest ich rewizja w tych nowych warunkach. Zresztą organizowanie pomocy makrofinansowej dla Ukrainy jest dowodem na to, że dodatkowe, świeże pieniądze są potrzebne.

Ale chciałbym zgłosić tutaj dwa zasadnicze zastrzeżenia do propozycji, które pojawiają się także w sprawozdaniu. Otóż te nowe zasoby własne, szczególnie o charakterze środowiskowym, mają charakter regresywny. Bardziej obciążają kraje mniej zamożne niż te bogate i doświadczenia z opłatą od nieprzetworzonego plastiku w przypadku mojego kraju, Polski, dobitnie to pokazują.

I drugie poważne zastrzeżenie to sprzeciw wobec chęci wprowadzenia zasady kwalifikowanej większości przy uchwalaniu ram finansowych. Panie Komisarzu, to jest absolutnie nie do przyjęcia. Umawialiśmy się, że o sprawach finansowych decydujemy jednomyślnie. I to, co się proponuje, pogłębi tylko różnice pomiędzy krajami.

João Pimenta Lopes (The Left). – Senhora Presidente, o Parlamento reconhece o que já se antecipava quando aprovou o orçamento: o orçamento é insuficiente. Mais ainda no quadro dos sucessivos instrumentos, impondo ou mais endividamento ou antecipação de verbas, ou a resposta a mais com o mesmo orçamento.

O problema, inflação e guerra, dizem. Mas onde cabem os impactos das sanções ou os aproveitamentos especulativos que geram lucros ainda mais obscenos aos grandes grupos económicos? E que dizer de sucessivas reduções do orçamento na coesão, nos envelopes nacionais, na agricultura e pescas, enquanto se opta pelo aumento das despesas militares e pelos programas que servem sobretudo às grandes potências, o que não é conjuntural, mas resulta, sim, de uma decisão e opção política.

O que se exige é um efetivo reforço do orçamento através das contribuições nacionais com base no rendimento nacional bruto de cada país, pondo fim às borlas aos países que mais beneficiam da integração, o reforço cabal da coesão e dos fundos estruturais, eliminando as rubricas de defesa e intervencionismo externo, o fim da condicionalidade económica e política e o alinhamento das opções de investimento com as necessidades reais de cada país.

Karlo Ressler (PPE). – Poštovana predsjedavajuća, poštovani povjereniče, kolegice i kolege, proračun je temelj svakog europskog djelovanja u našim državama članicama, u našem neposrednom susjedstvu, ali i šire.

Kroz proračun određujemo naše strateške prioritete i budućnost našeg razvoja. Politički, gospodarski i socijalni kontekst u kojem definiramo te prioritete promijenjeni su do neprepoznatljivosti nakon brutalne ruske agresije na Ukrajinu. Tektonske promjene u sigurnosnoj strukturi i sigurnosnoj arhitekturi Europe, povijesna prekretnica, ali i ostali rastući globalni izazovi, nepredviđene potrebe koje su nastale u Europi zbog rata daleko nadilaze sredstva koja imamo na raspolaganju. Imamo ljudsku i moralnu odgovornost stati uz ukrajinski narod koji se bori za svoju slobodu, za svoju opstojnost, a isto tako imamo i odgovornost podržati Europu u transformaciji koja je pred nama. U novoj epohi neizvjesnosti pred nama su i nevjerojatne potrebe, od digitalne zelene tranzicije, europske konkurentnosti, sigurnosti i obrane. Treba nam povratak temeljnim europskim politikama kojih nema bez odgovarajućih sredstava.

Krajnje je vrijeme zato za ozbiljnu, temeljitu, detaljnu reviziju višegodišnjeg financijskog okvira.

Ilan De Basso (S&D). – Fru talman! Det är kris i Europa, och EU har i det här skedet visat handlingskraft. Vi har satsat hundratals miljarder på att öka energiproduktionen. Vi stöder Ukraina ekonomiskt och militärt och vi är i färd med att tvinga ner elpriserna.

Samarbete och solidaritet i EU är centralt för att vi ska klara den här krisen. Men vi måste också vara medvetna om våra begränsningar. För i den här allvarliga krisen så är det våra länder som drar det tyngsta lasset. Det är de nationella välfärdssystemen som våra medborgare förlitar sig på. Det är på nationell nivå som elstödet finansieras. Det är viktigt att vi har en diskussion om EU:s budget och hur vi kan göra så att den fungerar bättre.

Men vi måste förstå att det vi gör i EU måste komplettera det som görs i de enskilda medlemsstaterna. För här och nu är det våra länder som stöttar medborgarna. Det är där vi snabbt kan få fram hjälp till de mest utsatta grupperna. Jag är övertygad om att det är där våra gemensamma resurser gör störst skillnad i det här läget. Det borde styra debatten om EU:s budget.

Mauri Pekkarinen (Renew). – Arvoisa puhemies, kun Next Generation EU:sta päätettiin, päätöksen piti olla ainutkertainen, mutta maailma muuttuu kaiken aikaa. Mikrosirut, akut, puolustus: rahaa tarvittaisiin moniin uusiin tarpeisiin, mutta sitä EU:llakaan ei ole. Sama on tilanne useimmissa jäsenvaltioissa. Ne ovat velkaantuneet. Ne eivät pysty täyttämään finanssipoliittisia sääntöjä. Siksi lisärahan ottaminen sieltä on vaikea tehtävä. Sille tielle astuminen, siinä pitää olla tarkka. Ukraina on toinen tarina.

EU:n vastauksen näihin haasteisiin, joita kohtaamme, tulee olla kilpailukyvyn parantaminen, satsaaminen osaamiseen, innovaatioihin, tutkimukseen ja bisnekseen ja parempaan yhteistyöhön. ERA, valtiontuet, markkinoiden epäneutraliteetti ja sen tukeminen eivät voi olla Euroopan tie. Ei ainoastaan ja ei erityisesti pienten eurooppalaisten maiden. Menestyksemme ehto on se, että markkinat ovat reilut ja kilpailu siellä on aitoa.

Anna Deparnay-Grunenberg (Verts/ALE). – Frau Präsidentin, meine Damen und Herren! Eigentlich grenzt es an ein physikalisches Wunder, dass das Leben auf unserem Planeten überhaupt möglich wurde. Die unglaubliche Vielfalt und Schönheit der vermuteten 8,7 Millionen Tiere, Pflanzen, Organismen auf unserem Planeten ist nicht nur faszinierend, sondern ist auch die Prämisse für unser Leben.

Eine Million Arten sind heute vom Aussterben bedroht. Unsere Art und Weise, wie wir Platz einnehmen, wie wir Land- und Forstwirtschaft betreiben, wie wir das Land versiegeln, aber auch unsere Emissionen und der Klimawandel sind Treiber dieses rapiden Massensterbens.

Die Europäische Union muss ihre Ziele und ihre Versprechungen für die Rückkehr des Lebens auch umsetzen. Dafür brauchen wir effektive, verfügbare und auch zielgerichtete Finanzierungsmittel. Deshalb haben wir ja auch bereits 10 % als Ziel für die Biodiversitätsmaßnahmen in unserem EU-Haushalt fest verankert. Jetzt muss die Kommission dringend eine konsequente und an der Biodiversität orientierte Methodologie liefern, um diesem Artensterben entgegenzutreten und mit den Mitgliedstaaten endlich zu agieren, um das Artensterben zu stoppen.

Michiel Hoogeveen (ECR). – Voorzitter, toen ik in het Europees Parlement begon, gaf een prominent oud-lid van dit huis mij het advies: "Tradities zijn er om gebroken te worden." U kunt zich voorstellen dat ik enigszins teleurgesteld was toen ik de titel van dit debat zag. Want geheel in de traditie van dit Parlement hebben wij het weer over het "opschalen" van het meerjarig financieel kader.

De uitgaven van de EU gaan altijd omhoog. Altijd. Zo ook in dit verslag, waar financiële dekking bestaat uit het heffen van "eigen middelen", lees "EU-belastingen", terwijl het de nationale parlementen zijn die gaan over de belastingen die zij innen van hun burgers.

Voorzitter, tradities zijn er inderdaad om gebroken te worden. Hoe mooi zou het zijn als we het eens zouden gaan hebben over "inkrimpen"? Of om president Reagan te citeren: "Onze schuld is niet te hoog omdat we niet genoeg belasting hebben geheven. We hebben een te hoge schuld omdat we te veel hebben uitgegeven."

Andrey Novakov (PPE). – Madam President, dear Commissioner, I believe that Ms Marques and Mr Olbrycht deserve a congratulation for their work well done. I believe that the MFF desperately needed an update. It looks like an old black and white TV screen that we tried to connect to YouTube; it's not going to happen.

I'll give you only one example. In the previous MFF, there are about 30 billion for transport infrastructure. With the current numbers and the current prices of raw materials, the project that has been planned will never be implemented.

So we need an MFF that can cover the requirements of the high inflation, the war, the high prices of raw materials, the new prices of fuel, in order to get the job done and conclude those projects.

I believe this is the right direction and we have a last chance now to cover the expectations of the people who are outside this building, just before the European elections.

Pedro Silva Pereira (S&D). – Senhora Presidente, Senhor Comissário, desde que o Quadro Financeiro Plurianual europeu foi aprovado, em dezembro de 2020, o mundo mudou e mudou bastante. Só não vê quem não quer.

Estamos agora confrontados com uma guerra terrível na Europa, uma crise da energia e das cadeias de abastecimento, uma espiral de inflação, uma mudança de rumo da política monetária e, provavelmente, uma recessão.

O cenário que serviu de base ao Quadro Financeiro Plurianual mudou radicalmente. Por isso, o quadro financeiro de dezembro de 2020 não está em condições de responder aos novos desafios de dezembro de 2022. Apelamos, por conseguinte, à Comissão para que reveja urgentemente o atual Quadro Financeiro Plurianual para o tornar mais ambicioso, mais flexível e mais adequado aos desafios do momento. Só assim poderemos estar à altura das expectativas dos cidadãos.

Engin Eroglu (Renew). – Frau Präsidentin, sehr geehrter Herr Kommissar Hahn! Wir diskutieren heute den Mehrjährigen Finanzrahmen 2021-2027, und dass wir diesen anpassen müssen, steht außer Zweifel.

Aber zur Klarheit und Wahrheit gehört auch, dass er, obwohl es zum Brexit kam, leider der höchste Haushalt bis dato ist. Das heißt, wir haben hier schon aus dem Vollen geschöpft. Auch bei der Anpassung haben wir damals schon noch mal 750 Milliarden draufgehauen für den Wiederaufbaufonds. Das heißt, der Haushalt wurde angepasst, und wir müssen jetzt auch wieder anpassen.

Aber eins ist doch klar: Zur Wahrheit und Klarheit gehört doch auch, liebe Kolleginnen und Kollegen und sehr geehrter Herr Hahn: All das Geld, was wir hier aufstocken wollen, das nehmen wir den Mitgliedstaaten weg, und diese werden es ihren Bürgern wegnehmen, es wird zu mehr Steuern und mehr Belastungen führen.

Ich glaube, dass das der falsche Weg ist. Ich bin der festen Überzeugung, dass wir hier auch mal mit Wahrheit und Klarheit anfangen müssen. Ich weiß auch nicht, welche Krise noch kommen soll nach dem Krieg in der Ukraine, nach Corona, nach der Krise des billigen Geldes, des Rausches des Konsums, dass wir jetzt endlich mal anfangen, bei uns zu sparen.

Warum nehmen wir jetzt nicht mal den Mut in die Hand und sagen: Ein Sitz für das Europäische Parlament? Warum sind wir nicht mutig und sagen: Wir reduzieren die Anzahl der Kommissare – alles das, was in unserer Hand ist?

Mittwoch, 14. Dezember 2022

Anna-Michelle Asimakopoulou (PPE). – Madame la Présidente, Monsieur le Commissaire, chers collègues, depuis l'adoption du cadre financier pluriannuel, deux événements aux conséquences majeures, la pandémie et l'invasion russe totalement injustifiée de l'Ukraine, ont radicalement changé notre vie. À l'heure de la «permacrise», le cadre financier pluriannuel n'est pas adapté aux objectifs qu'il vise, et il ne permet pas en l'état d'assurer la transition verte et numérique.

Confrontés à un monde multipolaire, nous devons renforcer l'autonomie stratégique de l'Union européenne et financer nos nouvelles ambitions politiques, telles que le paquet législatif sur les semi-conducteurs ou la facilité pour la reprise et la résilience.

À ce jour, nous avons dû utiliser de l'argent provenant de domaines essentiels du budget européen, comme la réserve de solidarité et d'aide d'urgence ou la politique agricole commune. Paralyser ces domaines aura un effet problématique sur nos citoyens et sur l'Union dans son ensemble.

Le budget a besoin de nouvelles ressources pour faire face aux nouvelles crises. Cela signifie une révision ambitieuse du CFP et de nouvelles ressources propres. Nous accusons un retard trop important pour continuer comme si de rien n'était. Nous avons besoin d'un budget européen plus solide, plus résilient et plus flexible, capable de faire face aux crises passées, présentes et futures.

René Repasi (S&D). – Frau Präsidentin, Herr Kommissar! Die Bekämpfung der sozialen und ökonomischen Konsequenzen des Ukrainekrieges wird teuer. Und in Zeiten, in denen die EZB die Inflation bekämpft, fällt sie als Retterin von Staaten aus.

Heute Morgen haben wir die Reaktion Europas auf den *Inflation Reduction Act* der Vereinigten Staaten diskutiert. Entweder müssen wir hier die EU-Beihilfenkontrolle massiv zurücknehmen, sodass starke Mitgliedstaaten damit konkurrieren können. Dann allerdings ist der Preis das Auseinanderfallen des Binnenmarktes. Oder wir brauchen unionsweite Mittel. Aber machen wir es ehrlich: 1 % des europäischen BIP reicht noch lange nicht aus, um mit den USA oder China mithalten zu können.

Deshalb brauchen wir ein zusätzliches, ich zitiere: „dauerhaftes Sonderinstrument, das über die Grenzen des MFR hinausgeht" so wie es in dem Bericht unter Ziffer 66 steht. Das ist die entscheidende Zeile. Nur so schaffen wir, als Europa wettbewerbsfähig zu sein und mit den Amerikanern mitzuhalten.

Das Bundesverfassungsgericht ist hier übrigens kein Problem. Dieses hat nämlich nicht entschieden, dass ein Mechanismus nicht dauerhaft sein könne. Nein, die schuldenfinanzierten Mittel dürfen nur die Eigenmittel des Haushaltes nicht übersteigen.

Andrius Kubilius (PPE). – Madam President, colleagues. I would like to say a few words about the major message of the report. And that message is very simple: we are living in a time of war, but not with our finances, since the MFF was planned and approved for permanent peace.

We need to understand that this war is also our war, and it demands from us mobilisation of all of our resources. In order to win the war, you need to have in order your army and also your finances. You need to have sufficient war finances. We need to finance arms deliveries to Ukraine, the budgetary needs of Ukraine, the reconstruction of Ukraine, the accession of Ukraine and other new candidate countries towards the EU.

The report's main message is clear: the MFF's structure and size is not able to meet the needs of the war and also the needs of other big crises, urgencies. Why is this so? The report speaks very clearly, I quote, 'Parliament regrets the gradual decrease of the EU budget as a percentage of EU gross national income and the excessive focus on capping overall spending at roughly 1% of EU GNI'.

This is a most important message. We cannot stay with 1% because at the end it will bring the whole EU into very painful crisis of its own finances. We need to avoid it. This crisis of the war is a good occasion for us to strengthen ourselves from a geo-political point of view and also radically strengthen our finances. This is the only way we can make the EU strong again.

Bogusław Liberadzki (S&D). – Pani Przewodnicząca! Panie Komisarzu! Niech mi wolno będzie zacząć od słów uznania zarówno dla Jana Olbrychta, jak i Margaridy Marques za wykonaną pracę. To jest kawał dobrej i potrzebnej roboty. Druga uwaga. My nie mówimy tutaj o rewizji, zmianie czy rewolucji wieloletnich ram finansowych, bo mówimy: ulepszenie wieloletnich ram finansowych, gotowy na nowe wyzwania, odporny budżet Unii Europejskiej. A zatem chcemy zrobić lepszy pożytek z istniejących pieniędzy i zasobów.

Dwa punkty, które są wyeksponowane jako szczególnie ważne. To jest inflacja i spadek realnej wartości pieniądza i punkt drugi: nowe zdarzenia, głównie wojna w Ukrainie. I z tego punktu widzenia uważam, że zwłaszcza w punktach 9, 10, 14 sprawozdania po prostu spełniamy oczekiwania. Ja bym chciał jednocześnie wyrazić głębokie przekonanie, że zamiast wielu słów na temat drążącego nas zewsząd kryzysu, powinniśmy raczej zmobilizować się do tego, w jaki sposób lepiej zagospodarować środki. *Simply to make better use of already owned resources.*

Tomislav Sokol (PPE). – Poštovana predsjedavajuća, povjereniče, izvjestitelji, kolegice i kolege, od donošenja aktualnog višegodišnjeg financijskog okvira politički, gospodarski i socijalni kontekst promijenio se do neprepoznatljivosti, počevši od dosad nezabilježenih razmjera i dramatičnih posljedica pandemije koja još nije završena, pa sve do rata u Ukrajini i enormnog porasta cijena.

Možemo slobodno reći da je trenutačni VFO opterećen do krajnjih granica te ne može poslužiti za odgovor na izazove. Iz tog razloga, moramo početi ozbiljno razmišljati o reviziji VFO-a jer uobičajeni pristup nije ni približno dovoljan za rješavanje niza izazova koji se pojavljuju. Stoga pozdravljam činjenicu što se u izvješću poziva Komisija da podnese prijedlog sveobuhvatne i ambiciozne revizije VFO-a. Što se kohezijske politike tiče, ona se sve više koristi za jačanje drugih politika i otklanjanje nedostataka u proračunskoj fleksibilnosti ili mehanizmima za odgovor na krizu u sklopu VFO-a. U tom kontekstu, iako su mjere odgovora na krizne situacije nužne i korisne, kohezijska politika ne smije biti alat za odgovor na krizu. Postojeća mogućnost prijenosa sredstava iz fondova kohezijske politike u druge instrumente EU-a u iznosu do 5% početnih dodijeljenih sredstava pruža dovoljnu fleksibilnost, no na tome treba i ostati te ne povećavati taj prag. Također, posebno je važno da revizija VFO-a ne dovede do smanjenja iznosa unaprijed dodijeljenih nacionalnih omotnica ili programa EU-a.

Financiranje kohezijske politike mora i dalje prvenstveno služiti njenom glavnom cilju: smanjenju razlika u razvijenosti između pojedinih regija Europske unije.

Matthias Ecke (S&D). – Frau Präsidentin, Herr Kommissar, liebe Kolleginnen und Kollegen! Stellen Sie sich vor, Sie bauen ein Haus. Dafür legen Sie jeden Monat Geld zurück. Ihr Haus soll standfest sein, modern, klimaneutral, und noch Ihre Enkel sollen darin wohnen. Doch dann brauchen Sie Geld für andere wichtige Zwecke: Sie helfen Ihrem Nachbarn in Not, sie brauchen Brot und Wärme für den Winter. Doch was wird aus dem Haus? Kein Mensch glaubt, dass man langfristig investieren kann, wenn man immer wieder Mittel abzweigt. Warum tun wir denn genau das mit dem EU Haushalt?

Die Regionalpolitik ist das zentrale langfristige Investitionsinstrument der EU. Sie hilft unseren Regionen, zu wachsen, grüner zu werden, moderner zu werden, Jobs zu schaffen. Doch für verschiedene Krisen werden immer wieder Mittel aus der Regionalpolitik zweckentfremdet. Allein im Rahmen des EFRE ist fast ein halbes Dutzend Ad-hoc-Instrumente entstanden. So gefährden wir Investitionen in Technologie, in Stadtentwicklung, in Radwege. Das ist der falsche Weg.

Für neue Aufgaben braucht man neue, zusätzliche Mittel. Bauen wir weiter am Haus Europa und laden wir unsere Nachbarn ein. Wir brauchen dafür einen stärkeren, zukunftsfesten Finanzrahmen.

Robert Hajšel (S&D). – Vážená pani predsedajúca, v dôsledku súčasnej energetickej krízy a vysokej inflácie môže podľa predpovedí WHO túto zimu prísť o život viac ako 120 tisíc ľudí v Európe. Státisíce prídu o prácu a milióny ľudí budú mať na výber, či zdravo jesť alebo dostatočne kúriť. Ľuďom preto musíme pomôcť, keďže do tejto situácie sa nedostali svojou vinou, ale kvôli ruskej invázii na Ukrajinu, našim sankciám voči Rusku a jeho následným protiopatreniam. Jasne sa ukazuje, že v súčasnosti platný dlhodobý rozpočet nestačí a potrebujeme štrukturovanejší prístup, ktorý nám umožní lepšie podporovať naše domácnosti aj naše podniky čeliace výzvam, ako je táto energetická kríza alebo kríza vyvolaná pandémiou koronavírusu. Treba ale postupovať tak, aby sme boli schopní splácať aj náklady spojené so zvyšujúcimi sa úrokovými mierami a financovať programy, ako je EU4health alebo Erasmus+. Ale verte, ľuďom je úplne jedno, či dodatočný finančný nástroj vytvoríme v rámci dlhodobého rozpočtu alebo bude nezávislý od výdavkových stropov v dlhodobom rozpočte. Musí to byť ale zdroj, vďaka ktorému budeme schopní v budúcnosti lepšie a rýchlejšie odpovedať na krízové situácie a ich sociálne dôsledky.

Pyynnöstä myönnettävät puheenvuorot

Sunčana Glavak (PPE). – Poštovana predsjedavajuća, poštovani povjereniče, kolegice i kolege, jasno je da živimo u vremenu velikih izazova koji se odražavaju na svakodnevicu naših građana i koji zahtijevaju jasne i odlučne odgovore.

Mogli bismo reći da nam zapravo treba reset. U ovoj godini, koja je bila godina puna izazova, bila je vrlo turbulentna, svjedočili smo ruskoj agresiji na Ukrajinu, porastu cijena energenata i pojačanom inflatornom pritisku. Svaki od ovih elemenata uvjetovao je da dodatni financijski trošak dovede do značajnog opterećenja dostupnih sredstava. Kako bi se prilagodili ovim promjenama moramo osigurati pravovremene i konkretne mjere, no ne na štetu manje razvijenih članica. Pozivam stoga da iskoristimo puni potencijal i svoje institucionalne uloge u donošenju proračuna Unije i pošaljemo jasnu poruku stabilnosti našim građanima.

Moramo djelovati razumno i strukturne promjene zaista su nam nužne. One moraju biti pravovremene i konkretne, jer samo tako ćemo osigurati povjerenje našim građanima.

(Pyynnöstä myönnettävät puheenvuorot päättyvät)

Johannes Hahn, *Member of the Commission*. – Madam President, dear colleagues, I thank you once again for having this exchange of views today and I thank you for your engagement in reflecting about the future of the MFF. And listening to all of you, I have heard a lot of support for an ambitious but targeted MFF review.

Because we have to acknowledge that since the adoption of the MFF, the current MFF, in December 2020, significant pressures on the EU budget have been testing its ability and flexibility to react to the multiple humanitarian, economic and social consequences of the war of aggression against Ukraine for neighbouring countries into the Union.

And therefore, we have mobilised some of the flexibilities of the MFF and in particular special instruments, symmetric ones and non-symmetric ones. The flexibility that can be found within the MFF and within programmes is essential. While these instruments have been increased compared to the 2014 and 2020 MFF, they remain limited in size and we are mobilising them at a fast pace.

An ambitious review means that we must not shy away from taking a critical look at where the Union budget spends and how it can address both our long-term priorities and tackling new challenges and emergencies. Political courage is finally needed to reconsider where to prioritise funds and where we can economise our spending, given the difficult economic conditions across Europe.

The current geopolitical and economic situation is defined by events, which are still subject to significant uncertainty, and the Commission continues to monitor the situation. We will assess the needs carefully and responsibly as part of a long-term reflection on the future of the Union budget.

But already today, and this to those who are critical, I would like to say and to recall about the gradual loss of purchasing power due to the inflation and the fact that we have an automatic deflator of 2%. So in that respect, already something has to be done. But I fully agree with all those who have said we have to see to which extent we can flexibilise the budget or to create something which enables us to react faster, quicker to future possible developments, as it was the case in the past.

So I am looking forward to a very intensive discussion in the next couple of weeks and months because there is an urgency and we have to address it.

Jan Olbrycht, *rapporteur*. – Madam President, Mr Commissioner, I think that at the end of our debate, before voting, it's very clear that the European Parliament, in its majority, really feels co-responsible for the actions which should be organised and made by the European Union.

This is our challenge but, of course, we know very well how difficult it is and how difficult it will be to find the financial resources to do it. So that's why I think, and I hope, that you understand that we are waiting for the very concrete steps.

I would like to thank Mr Commissioner for explaining what is the ambitious review, but I understand that when we speak about revision and the Commission speaks about review, the question is, is it a real difference? I don't think so. I don't think so, because if we want to change something, and we have to change, we need a very deep and ambitious review.

And, of course, at the end of this debate, I would like to say that if this review is really well done and really not only ambitious but very, very concrete, the conclusions will be absolutely obvious, because the review will show that we have to change the MFF. So I think that if your review will be ambitious, we will have revision, and I think that we share this view and the Council will agree as well.

Margarida Marques, *Rapporteur.* – Senhora Presidente, no final deste debate, é claro que precisamos de um QFP revisto, precisamos de proteger a política de coesão e precisamos de um instrumento permanente dentro do orçamento da União Europeia. E pedimos à Comissão que, na preparação da proposta revista do QFP 2021-2027, tenha em conta as linhas políticas que constam desta resolução e que são os pedidos do Parlamento.

Termino este debate agradecendo a Jan Olbrycht, que preparou comigo este relatório. Jan, é um prazer trabalhar contigo! Agradeço aos relatores-sombra que ajudaram a tornar este relatório ambicioso e orientado para o futuro, a Valérie Hayer, a Rasmus Andresen, a Dimitrios Papadimoulis, aos relatores setoriais das diferentes comissões, porque também eles tiveram uma palavra a dizer, ao secretariado da Comissão dos Orçamentos e às nossas equipas pelas horas longas e pelo trabalho de qualidade. Obrigada!

Vamos por o Quadro Financeiro Plurianual da União Europeia a funcionar ao serviço da União Europeia e dos cidadãos.

Puhemies. – Keskustelu on päättynyt.

Äänestys toimitetaan huomenna torstaina 15.12.2022.

Kirjalliset lausumat (171 artikla)

Eugen Jurzyca (ECR), *písomne.* – EÚ dnes čelí viacerým problémom, ktoré sa v roku 2020 pri schvaľovaní rozpočtu neočakávali (napríklad vojna na Ukrajine, vysoké ceny energií a vysoká inflácia). Súhlasím s tým, že preto treba prispôsobiť rozpočet EÚ novej realite. Nesúhlasím však s výzvou v správe, aby sme zachovali financovanie naplánovaných programov a nové výzvy riešili len dodatočnými zdrojmi. Podľa mňa by sme mali klásť väčší dôraz na to, aby sme zdroje na potrebné výdavky získali presunom z neefektívnych programov v rámci súčasného rozpočtu. Inak to bude na úkor hospodárskeho rastu, teda životnej úrovne ľudí v EÚ.

16. Beratungen des Petitionsausschusses im Jahr 2021 (Aussprache)

Puhemies. – Esityslistalla on seuraavana Loránt Vinczen vetoomusvaliokunnan puolesta laatima mietintö vetoomusvaliokunnan vuonna 2021 käsittelemistä asioista 2022/2024(INI) (A9-0271/2022).

Loránt Vincze, *rapporteur.* – Madam President, Commissioner Hahn, dear colleagues, I am pleased to present you the report about the outcome of the Committee on Petitions' deliberations in 2021. It is the concluding part of this traditional exercise in which our committee provides a comprehensive overview of the work carried out in the previous year.

The Committee on Petitions, and I quote from the report, 'is best able to show citizens what the European Union does for them and what solutions it can provide at European, national or local level'. I would emphasise that our committee should be considered as a bridge between Europeans and the EU institutions. Petitions enable citizens to contribute to the legislative work and to make the institutions accountable.

Mittwoch, 14. Dezember 2022

In 2021, the European Parliament received 1392 petitions, which represent a decrease by 11.5% compared to 2020, but an increase by 2.5% compared to the petitions registered in 2019. Last year there were considerable differences in the number of petitions submitted to the committee, with most of the petitions concerning Spain with 17%, followed by Germany with 9.7%, then Italy, Greece, Romania, Poland and France. Slovenia and Estonia remain the countries least concerned.

More than 78% of the petitions were submitted via Parliament's Petitions Web Portal, confirming that it has become by far the most used channel for citizens to submit petitions. The number of users supporting one or more petitions was more than 200 000; that means four times more than in 2020.

The Committee on Petitions had 12 meetings, at which 159 petitions were discussed, with over 100 petitioners present remotely at that time. Under difficult circumstances, I must say that our committee swiftly adapted to the new way of working and played a key role in ensuring Parliament's prompt response to citizens' concerns. Our committee organised one fact-finding visit and five public hearings, partly jointly with other parliamentary committees. The Committee on Petitions adopted several reports, opinions and forwarded short motions for resolution to the plenary.

Petitions were submitted in 22 of the official languages of the European Union. German and English remain the most used languages. As regards the nationality, petitions submitted by German citizens represent the highest number. There was a considerable rise in the number of petitions submitted by Italian and Greek nationals.

Now on the subject of the petitions: a large number of those were related to the public health emergency triggered by the outbreak and spread of COVID-19; fundamental rights, health and environment were the most important topic of the petitions. As an example, we dealt also petitions concerning the coexistence with large carnivores, notably wolves and brown bears in Europe. I have to underline that several petitions related to the rights of national minorities, especially in the areas of right to education in their mother tongue, linguistic or cultural rights, but also their right to property as outlined in petitions concerning land confiscation and restitution cases.

The efficient work of the Committee on Petitions relies on the cooperation of the Commission and other institutions. The Commission is our strongest partner in examining petitions. We count on the Commission also in the broader follow up in these topics which have been raised by the petitioners.

Member States are also invited to take part in the discussions. Petitions very often concern one or more Member States, or they include a cross-border element.

Petitions are useful means to draw the attention of the EU institutions and the Member States to matters that affect and concern citizens, that they can also contribute to the EU current debates. When citizens choose to address their concerns and complaints directly to their elected EU representatives, they place significant trust in the Parliament, and we must continue to do our utmost, also in the Petitions Committee, to validate this trust.

Johannes Hahn, *Member of the Commission*. – Madam President, honourable Members, on behalf of the Commission, I really would like to welcome Mr Vincze's report, which offers a comprehensive overview of the Committee on Petitions' activities in 2021.

Engaging with citizens remains of paramount importance to the Commission and petitions are an effective channel for direct contact and open dialogue on problems affecting the daily lives of Europeans.

We are committed to providing timely and pertinent contributions to Parliament's response to these concerns. A clear signal of this commitment is that throughout 2021, Commission representatives were present at all meetings of the Committee on Petitions, including at the highest political level.

For example, my colleague, Vice-President Šefčovič, was with you on 3 December 2021 to hold the structured dialogue in accordance with the Framework Agreement on relations between our two institutions. Vice-President Jourová discussed the European Citizens' Initiative with you on 15 July last year, and Commissioner Dalli on 22 March last year presented to you the strategy for the rights of persons with disabilities for this decade.

Even though the overall number of petitions decreased in 2021 compared to the year before, the Commission still received 554 new ones from the European Parliament, which required us to provide contributions. Out of this total number, we have so far transmitted our replies on 327 petitions. The remaining petitions are currently in different stages of the internal approval procedure.

I would like to say a few words about the main topics citizens have raised in these petitions because this is a good thermometer of their concerns. On the COVID-19 pandemic, the Commission has constantly provided information and explained the efforts made at Union level – coordinated response measures, shared science and research efforts, joint procurement of vaccines and protective equipment.

As reiterated in the European Green Deal, we are working with Member States to ensure the correct implementation of Union environmental law through financing, technical assistance and enforcement. The situation on the ground in Member States has already improved in areas like air quality and the protection of natural ecosystems, among others. We support environmental governance at national level so that citizens can access national mechanism and judicial systems. We have taken legal actions whenever needed against projects that may cause irreversible environmental or public health damage on a significant scale. We welcome the opinion adopted by the Committee on Petitions on our proposal for a directive on environmental crime.

On fundamental rights, I would like to commend your efforts to support and promote the rights of people with disabilities, as well as LGBTIQ+ rights with special attention being paid to rainbow families. I am pleased to inform you that last week, on 7 December, the Commission made a proposal for a regulation on the recognition of parenthood between Member States. As reflected in the 2021-2030 strategy for the rights of persons with disabilities, together with Member States, we make efforts to ensure full participation of persons with disabilities in our society. By the end of 2023, the Commission will propose a European Disability Card to facilitate mutual recognition of disability status within the Union.

The Commission agrees with you on the importance of the European Citizens' Initiative, which gives Union citizens the opportunity to initiate debates on issues that concern them.

Finally, I would like to reiterate our commitment to addressing infringement-related petitions. The proper application of Union law is a collective responsibility shared between the Commission, as the guardian of the Treaties, and national authorities and courts. Therefore, I welcome your call on national authorities to be proactive in taking the necessary measures to respond to citizens' petitions in cases of systemic failure to comply with Union law.

The infringement procedure allows the Commission to take action if it considers that a Member State breaches Union law, asking Member States to remedy the situation by a certain date. Infringements contribute to addressing systemic problems affecting a large amount of people, often across Member States. To put it simply, our enforcement work focuses on addressing the root causes of problems. That procedure is not designed to offer concrete solutions for individuals or ensure individual redress. Petitioners, pointing to the incorrect application of Union law in individual cases would benefit more from the mechanisms at national level, such as national courts, regulatory bodies or Ombudsman. If the problem has a cross-border dimension, then the SOLVIT network may offer quick remedies.

To conclude, I want to reassure you that the Commission remains committed to maintaining its close and fruitful cooperation with Parliament in general and with the Committee on Petitions in particular. In this way we can work together to continue effectively addressing the matters that citizens address to the European institutions.

Peter Jahr, *im Namen der PPE-Fraktion.* – Frau Präsidentin, Herr Kommissar, meine sehr verehrten Kolleginnen und Kollegen! Ich bedanke mich ausdrücklich bei meinem Kollegen Loránt Vincze, für seine gute Arbeit, für seinen Bericht. Er hat es geschafft, durch gute Kompromisse einen objektiven Bericht zu erstellen, der nicht unnötig politisiert wurde und die Arbeit des Ausschusses im Jahr 2021 ausreichend darstellt. Näher als der Petitionsausschuss kann man im europäischen Entscheidungsprozess nicht am Bürger sein.

Der Petititionsausschuss hat im Jahr 2021 zwölf Ausschusssitzungen abgehalten, in denen 159 Petitionen mit 113 zugeschalteten Petenten erörtert wurden. Das gibt es wohl kaum in einem anderen, nationalen Petitionsausschuss, und es ist wirklich eine Besonderheit: Es ist gelebte Demokratie.

Welche Schlussfolgerungen ziehe ich aus dem Bericht, bzw. was kann man noch besser machen? Ein relativ hoher Anteil der eingegangenen Petitionen, 26,5 %, werden für unzulässig erklärt. Das heißt, hier ist noch umfassende Kommunikationsarbeit notwendig, um den Bürgern zu erklären, wofür der Europäische Petitionsausschuss zuständig ist.

Zweitens: Ich bedauere sehr, dass die Kommission es noch immer oft versäumt, den Petitionsausschuss umfassend über legislative und nichtlegislative Maßnahmen zu informieren, die im Anschluss an eingegangene Petitionen ergriffen wurden.

Drittens: Unsere Petenten wenden sich häufig an den Petitionsausschuss, wenn es um dringliche Probleme geht. Mir persönlich dauert die Abarbeitung der Petitionen immer noch zu lange, und wir müssen auch den Rückstand an vorhandenen Petitionen abbauen, weil das das Vertrauen in die EU-Institutionen schwächt.

Viertens: Ich finde es schade, dass in letzter Zeit die Arbeit des Petitionsnetzwerks – damit ist die Zusammenarbeit des Petitionsausschusses mit den Fachausschüssen gemeint – ein bisschen eingeschlafen ist. Wir könnten da wieder einen *wake up call* machen.

Und zum Schluss wünsche ich natürlich uns allen ein gesegnetes Weihnachtsfest und ein gesundes neues Jahr 2023.

Cristina Maestre Martín De Almagro, *en nombre del Grupo S&D*. – Señora presidenta, gracias al ponente por el trabajo realizado. También quiero agradecer a mi compañero, Álex Saliba, como ponente alternativo, el trabajo realizado.

La Comisión de Peticiones es la vía de comunicación más directa entre la ciudadanía y las instituciones europeas. Gracias a las peticiones los europeos pueden denunciar la vulneración de derechos o plantear debates a tres bandas —con el Parlamento, el Consejo y la Comisión— sobre determinadas propuestas en las que tenga competencias la Unión Europea. Es verdad, pocos parlamentos en el mundo tienen esta fórmula de rendición de cuentas y de aseguramiento de los derechos.

La pregunta es ¿se potencia plenamente este valioso instrumento? Yo coincido con mis compañeros en que hay espacio para la mejora, por ejemplo, una mayor implicación de la Comisión Europea a la hora de aportar su valoración ante determinadas denuncias. En muchas ocasiones muestra una equidistancia que no debería ser tal a la hora de posicionarse sobre cuestiones que son de su competencia. Debería también ser más proactiva y más rápida y diligente en la tramitación de esas peticiones. Por lo tanto, aprovecho la presencia del comisario Hahn para hacerle llegar esa reivindicación.

En cualquier caso, ¿conocen suficientemente los ciudadanos la Comisión de Peticiones? ¿la valoran? ¿les es útil? Podría decirse que, en términos generales, sí. Sería injusto negar el trabajo serio y comprometido de la mayoría de los compañeros que trabajan por dar voz y respuesta a los ciudadanos. Es nuestro deber velar por el correcto funcionamiento de la Comisión de Peticiones, que debería llamarse Comisión de Ciudadanía Plena. Deberíamos estar todos los días sacándole brillo a la Comisión de Peticiones. Sin embargo, determinados diputados, en vez de sacarle brillo, le sacan tajada. En vez de irse a sus partidos a hacer oposición, utilizan esta comisión presentando peticiones no solo para defender a los ciudadanos, sino principalmente para atacar a Gobiernos democráticamente elegidos. Hay peticiones que se han debatido hasta en tres ocasiones sin ni siquiera tener competencia en el ámbito europeo, solo porque algunos deciden seguir estrategias partidistas que no respetan la decisión de los ciudadanos. En el camino, muchos ciudadanos aguardan años, incluso décadas, sin obtener respuesta de este Parlamento.

Hagamos una reflexión conjunta, que vaya más allá del sectarismo partidista de unos cuantos, sobre cómo podemos mejorar la Comisión de Peticiones. Esto también es democracia y esto también es rendición de cuentas y, ante todo, son derechos de la ciudadanía europea.

Feliz Navidad para los compañeros y para todos los miembros del Parlamento Europeo.

Yana Toom, *on behalf of the Renew Group*. – Madam President, dear colleagues, as all technical things were, fortunately, already said, I can allow myself to be a bit more general.

First of all, I would like to thank the rapporteur and the other shadows for their collaboration on this report. Secondly, I have to admit that the Petitions Committee is actually my favourite in this House, for this is the place where you hear the real voice of real Europeans. And you know what? Europeans are very well aware of their rights. Almost everyone knows about the European Charter of Fundamental Rights, but very few realise that it is consistent with Article 51, which says that the Charter has to be followed only when European law is implemented, which in practice means that the national legislator is not supposed to follow or even to read it. So in accordance with the Rules of Procedure, we, as a rule, declare these petitions inadmissible, despite the fact that very often we see clear violations of people's rights.

The Commission says, 'no worries, we have some other tools in our toolbox'. One of them – widely promoted – is the Citizens' Initiative. So we urge people to use it. But do they receive a proper answer? This might not be the case. We all remember what happened to Minority SafePack: nothing. I mean, nothing happened. The Commission just does not dare to touch the hot potato of minority issues. Do you think all these more than a million Europeans who gave their signatures to support national and linguistic minorities are still pro-Europeans? Let's hope they are, despite the fact that here at PETI we clearly see all these bottlenecks of the European project when it comes to human rights.

Of course, there is a lot to be improved in the committee itself: a common set of clear and objective criteria, a petitions portal with clear information on what exactly falls under the Union's fields of activity. We have to stop misusing PETI for internal political issues, which unfortunately takes place sometimes.

But the main thing to improve is the European Union as such. If we prefer to limit ourselves to common market and border policies, we would not be able to meet the expectations of our citizens.

Margrete Auken, *on behalf of the Verts/ALE Group*. – Madam President, thank you to the rapporteur and colleagues who worked on this file; the result is overall balanced and positive.

It's good that we reiterate the request to the Commission to revise its approach to petitions, which the Parliament already considers to be in breach of the Treaties. It leaves many citizens who filed individual petitions without adequate protection of their rights.

I am happy that this report considers the best way forward to be an agreement between the Parliament and the Commission on the handling of petitions, and the fulfilment of the request to get access to the Commission's documents and information on EU pilot and infringement procedures, based on petitions.

But we should have been more outspoken on the very bad situation we are experiencing in this committee. Frankly, it's taken hostage mainly by Partido Popular on Spanish issues. These often have no connection with EU law but are nonetheless treated to accommodate national party political interest. This includes biased decisions that undermine the spirit of this citizen-close committee, and violate our internal rules and practices in ways that I have never seen in my 14 years of work in this committee.

We must safeguard the committee's credibility and restore its authentic European dimension by working in full compliance with all applicable rules, and truly be the citizens' gateway to the EU institutions.

Jorge Buxadé Villalba, *en nombre del Grupo ECR*. – Señora presidente, estas fueron algunas peticiones de España de 2021: fraude en la contratación temporal del personal interino, estados de alarma ilegales, abusos sexuales a menores tuteladas por gobiernos socialistas en Baleares y Valencia, y la carta de más de 2 500 jueces denunciando un serio riesgo para el Estado de Derecho en España. Hoy la situación es dramática. Pedro Sánchez, un autócrata sin escrúpulos, se ha concertado con los separatistas que dieron un golpe a la Constitución en el año 2017 para la demolición sistemática de la separación de poderes y el Estado de Derecho.

En el corazón de Europa, el Gobierno socialista, esta semana, va a aprobar un delito de sedición para liberar a los golpistas, corromper el delito de malversación de caudales públicos para amnistiar a todos los políticos ladrones, y asaltar —violentando la Constitución— el Poder Judicial y el Tribunal Constitucional, poniendo fin al Estado de Derecho. Vivimos en directo un golpe al Estado de Derecho y ustedes siguen amparando a un Gobierno que quiere llevar a España a sus tiempos más oscuros mientras chantajean a gobiernos conservadores. Pero España ni se negocia ni se vende, España se defiende. Es lo que millones de españoles van a hacer hasta el final de sus días, con ustedes o sin ustedes.

Mittwoch, 14. Dezember 2022

Luke Ming Flanagan, *on behalf of The Left Group*. – Madam President, one of the issues discussed at the committee last year was the defective block scandal in Ireland. We got great support from MEPs present. Having heard their case though, the Commission's first instinct was to run away from the issue, which begs the question: what's the point in having a Construction Products Regulation if it's not in force?

We ended up at the PETI Committee because our government wants to bury its head in the sand. That became even more clear this week with the leak of a draft audit carried out by Ireland's National Building Control Office. It poignantly pointed to the fact that market surveillance of construction products is to construction as public health is to medicine. The draft also stated millions are spent on planning with billions on remediation and fixing non-compliances. In comparison, very little is spent on building control, inspection and market surveillance.

But none of it made it into the politically sanitised version which the government released. The final report was a whitewash. The Commission can no longer run away from its responsibilities. The people's lives are at risk. We're all talking this week about corruption. Well, this is corruption, crippling and corrosive corruption. Time for the Commission to stop talking about it and act. DG GROW, I'm looking at you.

Antoni Comín i Oliveres (NI). – Señora presidenta, el derecho de petición es un componente fundamental de la ciudadanía europea y por ello es importantísimo que la Comisión de Peticiones examine de manera rigurosa todas las peticiones de los ciudadanos relacionadas con las competencias de la Unión.

Pero tenemos un problema, comisario, el cual, por cierto, ya ha sido apuntado por varios grupos parlamentarios este año: la presidenta de la comisión. La señora Monserrat instrumentaliza esta comisión, priorizando peticiones que o bien van en interés del nacionalismo español o bien en el de su partido, el Partido Popular español. Por ejemplo, estamos gastando tiempo y recursos para tramitar reiteradamente peticiones sobre el sistema escolar en Cataluña, ignorando que la Comisión ya ha dicho, en todas las ocasiones, que la Unión Europea no es competente en este tema. Yo fui presidente de la Comisión de Peticiones del Parlamento de Cataluña y nunca se me hubiera ocurrido hacer un uso tan sectario de mi cargo.

Señorías, necesitamos que la Comisión de Peticiones deje de ser el instrumento para los intereses nacionales o partidistas de su presidenta y que vuelva a su función original: un instrumento democrático para defender los derechos de los ciudadanos europeos.

Pyynnöstä myönnettävät puheenvuorot

Diana Riba i Giner (Verts/ALE). – Señora presidenta, señor comisario, así como nos repugna la corrupción, nos debe avergonzar también el descarado uso partidista que la presidenta Dolors Monserrat ha hecho y hace de la Comisión de Peticiones, que hoy no está al servicio de la ciudadanía, sino del Partido Popular español, con el apoyo de Renew y del Partido Popular Europeo.

Algunos datos: en esta legislatura el 40 % de las misiones que ha hecho esta comisión ha sido en España, dejando a los ciudadanos de los otros 26 Estados miembros fuera. Interpretaciones tendenciosas del Reglamento interno por parte de la presidenta han llevado a los coordinadores de diferentes grupos a quejarse formalmente. Y la lista sigue. Cargos electos del PP español presentando peticiones en una comisión que se supone que debería ser para los ciudadanos. Peticiones, como las que se refieren al catalán, que se mantienen abiertas a pesar de que la Comisión repita una y mil veces que este asunto no es competencia de Europa.

Presidenta Montserrat, esta institución y los ciudadanos europeos se merecen un poco más de respeto. *Shame on you!*

PRZEWODNICTWO: EWA KOPACZ

Wiceprzewodnicząca

(Koniec zgłoszeń z sali)

Johannes Hahn, *Member of the Commission*. – Madam President, honourable Members, the Commission pays special attention to the work of the Committee on Petitions. We will continue our efforts to improve the speed, quality and pertinence of our contributions to your replies to petitioners' concerns. I take note that your report insists once again on the link between petitions and infringement procedures. As I said, the proper application of Union law is a collective responsibility shared between the Commission, as the guardian of the Treaties, and the Member States. However, the decision on if and when to investigate the potential breach of Union law is the prerogative of the Commission, and we face the burden of proof in bringing cases before the European Union Court of Justice.

On your proposal to set up a one-stop-shop interinstitutional IT tool between the Commission and Parliament to share publicly available information on follow-up actions taken on petitions, we are ready to examine practical options in order to make it happen. For example, the Commission publishes its decisions on every step of an infringement procedure on the European webpage. This ensures transparency on the decision-making process, on the type of infringement pursued and on benefits that the resolution of these cases can bring to citizens and businesses. So, we might envisage a link between the Europa pages and the petition web portal to help citizens be regularly informed on how the Commission is already addressing their petitions via infringement procedures.

As regards an interinstitutional agreement between the Parliament and the Commission, the Commission considers the current interinstitutional context is sufficient and appropriate to ensure the efficient handling of petitions. The Commission deals with each and every petition received from the Parliament. It analyses all aspects of the issues raised by the petitioner and transmits its detailed responses to the Parliament. The Commission keeps your committee duly informed on how it will pursue the issues raised by the petitions within the limits of its competences.

However, I would also like to stress that when we have petitions that are not within the remit of the European Union competences, we should be very honest and upfront in explaining this to the petitioners. We commend the Parliament's commitment to respond to citizens' concerns and the overall parliamentary activity of the Committee on Petitions, including their reports and opinions, as well as the organisation of hearings and workshops on a wide range of topics.

So I am convinced that together we can show citizens that we take their concerns seriously and strengthen their confidence and trust in the European project, particularly in the current international context.

Loránt Vincze, *rapporteur*. – Madam President, I would like to thank all my colleagues for their valuable opinion and the good cooperation, to the shadow rapporteurs – you expressed very important proposals, you also expressed the political criticism.

Well, our Petitions Committee is a political body, and we give the chance to all the citizens, all the petitioners, no matter from which ideology they come from, to have their say, to be able to address the Committee, to hear possible remedies and the internal decision-making process in our Committee. I think it is done in a democratic manner.

Despite, of course, all the improvements that the petitions process went through, the overall number of petitions remains modest in relation to the total population of the EU. And this brings us to the conclusion that more efforts are needed to be done to step up the increase of the citizens' awareness. And also, Commissioner, you touched on the matter of informing the citizens about pilot projects, about infringement procedures, about legislative proposals, because these are all linked to the petitions process.

Petitions also make a valuable contribution to the work of other parliamentary committees, which give opinions or receive petitions for information. In 2021, 82 petitions were sent to other committees for opinion, and 548 for information. That's a very important amount of inter-committee cooperation.

In the end, I would also like to thank the Secretariat of the Committee, the advisors and my Office for their preparatory work on this file.

Przewodnicząca. – Zamykam debatę.

Głosowanie odbędzie się w czwartek 15 grudnia 2022 r.

Oświadczenia pisemne (art. 171)

Ádám Kósa (NI), *írásban*. – Köszönöm Vincze Loránt kollégám kiváló és alapos munkáját. Két dolgot szeretnék kiemelni:

Az Európai Bizottság 2021. január 14-i közleményében nem javasolta új jogi eszköz megalkotását a „Minority SafePack" elnevezésű európai polgári kezdeményezés ügyében. Ezáltal 1,1 millió európai uniós állampolgár hiteles aláírásával ellátott kezdeményezést hagyott figyelmen kívül. Az aláírók az Európai Unióban élő nemzeti és nyelvi kisebbséghez tartozó 50 millió személy védelmének javítását tűzték ki célul javaslatcsomagjukban. Sajnálatos, hogy az őshonos európai kultúrák és nyelvek védelme ma nem tartozik az Európai Bizottság prioritásai közé, ahogy a polgári kezdeményezés, mint a polgárok részvételi demokráciájának eszköze, és annak hitelessége sem.

Az 1056/2016. sz. petíció arra kéri az Európai Parlamentet, hogy tegye lehetővé a petíciók nemzeti jelnyelveken történő benyújtását. A petíció ugyan nyitva van, a Parlament szervei és néhai Sassoli elnök között folytak egyeztetések, a végrehajtás azonban a mai napig késlekedik. Kérem a tisztelt kollegákat, hogy tegyenek eleget ennek a petíciónak, hogy az európai unió siket állampolgárai a saját anyanyelvükön, jelnyelven adhassák be a jövőben a petícióikat!

17. Aussprache über Fälle von Verletzungen der Menschenrechte, der Demokratie und der Rechtsstaatlichkeit (Aussprache)

17.1. Niederschlagung der friedlichen Proteste in der gesamten Volksrepublik China durch die chinesische Regierung

Przewodnicząca. – Kolejnym punktem porządku dziennego jest debata nad pięcioma projektami rezolucji w sprawie tłumienia przez rząd chiński pokojowych protestów w Chińskiej Republice Ludowej (2022/2992(RSP))1.

1 Patrz protokół posiedzenia.

Isabel Santos, *Autora*. – Senhora Presidente, depois de assistirmos à cerimónia de entronização de Xi Jinping como líder supremo, eis que o que parecia impossível aconteceu. Sim, haverá sempre esperança enquanto existirem homens e mulheres capazes de se revoltar contra qualquer forma de tirania e clamar por liberdade e direitos.

Os protestos do povo chinês em relação às medidas Covid-19, pedindo liberdade e mesmo a saída de Xi Jinping do poder, demonstram a vontade do povo de lutar e forçaram o governo chinês a retroceder nas medidas de confinamento. Sim, é possível. Então, retiremos as conclusões e façamos dos diálogos sobre os direitos humanos algo efetivo e não um mero expediente. Sejamos consequentes na defesa dos direitos humanos na China.

Não fechemos os olhos às atrocidades cometidas em Xinjiang e no Tibete. Não fiquemos impávidos e serenos face ao processo de adoção em Macau de uma lei de segurança nacional igual à aplicada em Hong Kong, leis que violam as liberdades e garantias inscritas nas declarações sino-portuguesa e sino-britânica.

Não fechemos os olhos à forma como as plataformas tecnológicas têm cooperado para o controlo repressivo do povo chinês. E acabe-se de uma vez por todas, entre os Estados-Membros, com as extradições para a China.

Engin Eroglu, *Verfasser.* –Frau Präsidentin, sehr geehrte Frau Kommissarin! China hat sich unter der Herrschaft von Präsident Xi in den letzten zehn Jahren bezüglich der Menschenrechte massiv zurückentwickelt. In der jüngsten Entwicklung hat er sich nun auch auf Lebenszeit wählen lassen.

Es würde Stunden dauern, die barbarischen Menschenrechtsverletzungen in China hier aufzuzählen, sei es in Tibet, sei es in Hongkong oder sei es das schreckliche Verbrechen an den Uiguren in der Region Xinjiang. Was Wegschauen verursacht, das sehen wir gerade in der Ukraine. Es bleibt uns nichts anderes übrig, es ist unsere Pflicht, bei diesen schlimmen Menschenrechtsverletzungen in China hinzuschauen und jetzt schon klar zu mahnen und den richtigen Weg aufzuzeigen.

Die Menschenrechtsverletzungen beinhalten in der Region Xinjiang ja auch schon systemisch das Vorgehen bei der Vernichtung des Volkes der Uiguren. Deshalb ist es sehr wichtig, dass wir bei allen Demonstrationen, die in China stattfinden, als Europäisches Parlament ganz genau hinschauen und die Menschen vor Ort mit allem unterstützen, was wir haben, auch wenn das leider sehr begrenzt ist.

China nutzt seine Macht aus, rüstet auf ohne externe Bedrohung, ignoriert internationales Recht und baut letztendlich in der Europäischen Union eine Geheimpolizei auf. Daher fordere ich die Kommission auf, alles, was in ihren Möglichkeiten steht, zu tun und auch mit dem Rat gemeinsam Sorge dafür zu tragen, dass wir schnellstmöglich von der chinesischen Diktatur unabhängig werden. Und das müsste unser gemeinsames Ziel sein.

Reinhard Bütikofer, *Verfasser.* – Frau Präsidentin, Frau Kommissarin, liebe Kolleginnen und Kollegen! Gestern noch hat der Kollege David Leger von der EVP die Verhandlungen, die sehr harmonischen und konsensualen Verhandlungen über die Entschließung, über die wir morgen abstimmen werden, geleitet. Ich bedaure, dass er heute nicht als Koautor hier reden kann.

Zur Sache. Ich glaube, dass die landesweiten Proteste in China gegen die sogenannte *Zero-Covid Policy* der chinesischen Führung ein Ereignis von historischer Bedeutung darstellen. Da hat sich im Verhältnis zwischen dem Unterdrückerregime und dem unterdrückten Volk etwas geändert. Jahrzehntelang hatte es das nicht gegeben, dass sich landesweit Protest erhebt. Jahrzehntelang hatte es das nicht gegeben, dass Menschen aus den verschiedensten sozialen Gruppen gemeinsam protestieren. Und jahrzehntelang hatte es nicht gegeben, dass solche Forderungen direkt an die zentralen Verantwortlichen in Peking gerichtet werden. Die Pekinger Führung hat selber dafür gesorgt, dass dieser große Protest zustande gekommen ist. Und die Perspektive der chinesischen Freiheit, die im Moment so weit entfernt zu sein scheint, ist durch diese Proteste stärker geworden und näher gerückt.

Charlie Weimers, *author.* – Madam President, discontent is spreading in red China, where lockdowns remain an essential part of the zero-COVID policy. Lockdowns are enforced so harshly that 10 people, including a 3-year-old child, died when a fire broke out in a residential building in Xinjiang. Some suspect they could not get out and that firefighters were prevented from arriving at the scene by CCP pandemic laws.

The tragedy triggered protests across China and the world. Some, mainly in Chinese, bravely called for an end to CCP rule and for Xi Jinping to step down. Blank pieces of paper were used to mourn those who died and to protest against the censorship, cover-up and victim-blaming of the regime in Beijing.

We know that authoritarian regimes do not value human life. We know the CCP is on the wrong side of history. But why is High Representative Borrell silent? Where is the condemnation by the EU? Fellow colleagues, I've summarised High Representative Borrell's statements in support of the brave protesters in China. This is the summary.

(The speaker held up a sheet of paper)

Željana Zovko, *on behalf of the PPE Group*. – Madam President, Commissioner, dear colleagues, in the light of the ongoing criminal investigations into a corrupt network of some individual Members, former MEPs and assistants in the European Parliament, the EPP Group is extremely concerned about the integrity of the foreign policy positions of the European Parliament, as expressed in the urgency resolutions and procedures as foreseen in Rule 144 of the House.

Before we can establish with certainty that the integrity of the procedure and the network does not remain compromised by third countries like Qatar, we should stop all work on the urgency resolutions. We simply cannot continue with our business as usual. We must take bold and radical decisions to stop the damage of this corrupt network of individual Members, former MEPs, and assistants from spreading further into our parliamentary work. The EPP Group has therefore decided that it will not sign any urgency resolution, not take part in any preparation, negotiations or plenary debates in the context of the urgency resolutions.

Hannah Neumann (Verts/ALE). – Madam President, I would like, first of all, to make the statement that whatever Ms Zovko just said was totally out of scope of the debate. So please allow me to also make a remark a bit out of the ordinary. I have to say that I am quite surprised by the fact that the EPP now decides not to table, not to negotiate and not to vote on urgency resolutions. The fact is that apparently, third countries, autocratic regimes, are trying to interfere with us. They are trying to influence with illegal means, with bribery and corruption, the way we work here.

I don't think that our political answer to this should be to no longer criticise their human rights atrocities. So I really think we have to debate this in a proper way and not under the point of the Chinese Government crackdowns. We have also to honour the human rights defenders in China that we are supposed to be talking about here today.

Przewodnicząca. – Pani Poseł, chciałam tylko i wyłącznie zwrócić uwagę, że w momencie debaty mogła Pani zadać w ramach niebieskiej kartki pytanie do pani poseł. Pani poseł opuściła salę.

Panowie w sprawach proceduralnych, bardzo proszę, z powołaniem się na numer Regulaminu.

Reinhard Bütikofer (Verts/ALE). – Madam President, I would like to raise a point of order. My point of order is the request that Ms Zovko should be sanctioned because first, she misused a China debate to enact a hypocritical theatre, charging everybody else as culprits in a criminal gang system. And I also want to have her criticised for not even having the respect for her colleagues to wait until the question to her has been asked. I think that is completely objectionable behaviour. She should be sanctioned.

Przewodnicząca. – Bardzo proszę, w momencie kiedy w sprawach proceduralnych zabieramy głos, powoływać się na numer artykułu Regulaminu, w myśl którego będziemy zabierać głos.

René Repasi, *im Namen der S&D-Fraktion*. – Frau Präsidentin, Frau Kommissarin, liebe Kolleginnen und Kollegen! Meine Notizen liegen da, aber nach der Vorrednerin kann man nicht einfach so seine Rede in dieser einen Minute herunterhalten. Denn was hier gesagt worden ist, ist skandalös. Denn wir sprechen hier von einer dramatischen Menschenrechtsverletzung. Wir haben eine Entschließung, die klar ist im Wortlaut, dass das, was wir dort in China gesehen haben, die Unterdrückung von Meinungsäußerung, die Unterdrückung vor allen Dingen von Frauen, mit Schärfe verurteilt wird. Das ist unsere Pflicht, unsere noble Pflicht als Europäisches Parlament, dies mit Schärfe zu sagen.

Das Problem der Skandale, die wir hier in den letzten Tagen gesehen haben, ist, dass wir dieser Pflicht nicht nachgekommen sind, weil wir Dinge verwässert haben. Genau das machen wir hier nicht, und deswegen ist das eine andere Situation. Hier muss das Haus zusammenstehen und klar sagen, dass wir solidarisch mit den Frauen und mit den Männern sind, die hier auf die Straße gehen, die für ihre Meinungsfreiheit eintreten, wo wir sehen, was passiert, wenn man keine ordentliche Impfquote hat, weil man die Leute einsperrt und ihre Freiheitsrechte wegnimmt, wo keine Pressefreiheit, keine Meinungsfreiheit ist. Da, verdammt noch mal, muss das Europäische Parlament eine einheitliche Position haben und deutlich machen, dass es solidarisch steht. Das ist unsere einzige Kompetenz in der Außenpolitik. Lasst sie uns verantwortungsvoll nutzen und nicht die Dinge miteinander vermengen!

Przewodnicząca. – Panie Pośle, w myśl art. 10 Regulaminu, proszę używać tylko słów parlamentarnych na tej sali.

Marie-Pierre Vedrenne, *au nom du groupe Renew.* – Madame la Présidente, chers collègues, une nouvelle fois, nous mesurons le courage d'un peuple face à un régime totalitaire. Depuis plusieurs semaines, le gouvernement chinois voit sa jeunesse et sa population se soulever contre sa politique du zéro COVID-19. Ne nous y trompons pas: à travers elle, c'est contre le régime dictatorial qu'elles se retournent. À cela, le parti a répondu en fermant les espaces publics: fermeture des quartiers, suppression des panneaux de signalisation ou encore traçage électronique. Enfermer pour mieux régner, toujours.

Cependant, leur courage porte ses fruits. Pendant plus d'un mois, le pouvoir a annoncé un assouplissement de sa politique anti-COVID-19 et la suspension de l'application des déplacements. Ces annonces sont toutefois trompeuses. L'Europe doit être ferme et se tenir aux côtés des Chinois qui manifestent pour leurs droits les plus fondamentaux et leur quête de liberté. Ce débat doit aussi nous pousser à être plus fermes, face à ce rival systémique, dans notre politique commerciale, et à travailler pour une plus grande autonomie dans nos chaînes d'approvisionnement. Chers collègues, il est temps pour tous les dirigeants européens de prendre unanimement position en faveur des Chinois.

Manu Pineda, *en nombre del Grupo The Left.* – Señora presidenta, los días 1 y 2 de diciembre se celebró en Washington una reunión entre la Vicesecretaría de Estado de los Estados Unidos y el responsable de acción exterior de la Unión Europea. Una de las conclusiones de dicho encuentro fue que los Estados Unidos y la Unión Europea nunca habían estado tan alineados en nuestras perspectivas estratégicas.

Ahora, a continuación, en este Parlamento Europeo, parece que no hay límite que no estemos dispuestos a cruzar para menospreciar y criticar a China para mayor regocijo del dueño del circo, es decir, los Estados Unidos.

En esta ocasión se la condena por implementar las medidas anticovid que ellos habían decidido. Unas medidas anticovid, unas políticas que han demostrado una prevalencia de muerte por esta pandemia casi mil veces menor que la de los Estados Unidos. Y, a pesar de eso, han sido sensibles a las protestas y han cedido. Han cedido ante las peticiones de los manifestantes.

Pero parece que los impulsores de esta Resolución comparten más el tratamiento de Donald Trump o de Jair Bolsonaro, verdaderos hombres récord en índice de afectación y muerte en sus países. Aviso a los colegas que están en estas posiciones de que es muy estrecha la línea que separa el discurso de que las medidas anticovid no sirven para nada del de que con las vacunas anticovid se incrusta un chip que nos convierte en robot. Después de esto ya solo queda que la tierra es plana o que la mujer fue creada de la costilla del hombre, como tanto gusta en promulgar alguna escuela de los Estados Unidos.

Desde esta Unión Europea deberíamos apostar por una política exterior basada en la paz, la cooperación, la solidaridad y el beneficio mutuo, respetando la soberanía de los pueblos y los principios de la Carta de las Naciones Unidas y del Derecho internacional.

Milan Uhrík (NI). – Kolegovia, mne sa asi sníva. Tak koncentrované pokrytectvo ako tu, to som asi ešte v živote nevidel. Nejdem sa ani rozčuľovať nad tým, že za 7,5 tisícové platy tu zase nikto nesedí. Ale naozaj nerozumiem, prečo tu musíme riešiť protesty v Číne vzdialené desaťtisíce kilometrov namiesto toho, aby sa riešili problémy súčasných Európanov. Tak Parlament ide prijať nejaké odsudzujúce uznesenie za protesty v Číne. Ale ja sa pýtam, kde bola Európska únia, keď polícia potláčala protesty Európanov? Kde boli odsudzujúce rezolúcie europarlamentu, keď policajti na Slovensku strelili protestujúcemu chlapovi projektil do krku, že mal dieru v krku? Vtedy boli všetci ticho. Dnes sú protestujúci v Číne nazývaní uvedomelými občanmi bojujúcimi za slobodu, ale protestujúci Európania boli označovaní za dezolátov a za extrémistov a za nezodpovedných občanov. Prosím vás, s týmto absolútne nesúhlasím a myslím si, že mali by sme sa sústrediť na to, na čo sme boli zvolení. To znamená riešiť problémy Európanov a nie problémy celého sveta, pretože na to nás sem ľudia nezvolili.

Carina Ohlsson (S&D). – Fru talman! Redan i maj slog Världshälsoorganisationen fast att Kinas nolltoleranspolicy mot covid-19 inte är hållbar. Viruset går inte att utrota genom att tvångsomhänderta människor och spika igen deras bostäder.

Lägenhetsbranden i staden Urumqi i provinsen Xinjiang, där tio personer tragiskt omkom, har dock inspirerat till modiga manifestationer över hela Kina. Fredliga demonstranter håller upp tomma vita pappersark som symbol för den censur och det politiska förtryck som den kinesiska befolkningen genomlider. I stället för att straffa folket borde myndigheterna lyssna på deras uppmaningar, låta människor fritt uttrycka sina åsikter och protestera fredligt utan rädsla för repressalier.

Kinas brott mot grundläggande fri- och rättigheter måste sättas i centrum av EU:s relationer med Kina och lyftas öppet och transparent på den högsta politiska nivån, liksom de tvångsaborter och steriliseringar av uiguriska flickor och kvinnor som också utgör ett brott mot mänskligheten, som vi tidigare har konstaterat.

Thijs Reuten (S&D). – Madam President, Commissioner, colleagues, yes, the greatest gift that we can do to autocrats all over the world is to stop doing our job in here defending human rights. I will continue in my mother tongue, Dutch.

Heel China gingen ze door, de beelden van de gruwelijke brand in het Oeigoerse Ürümqi. De Chinese bevolking ging de straat op, verenigd tegen het bewind van Xi Jinping. Dit had het moment moeten zijn voor China's democratisering. Maar natuurlijk was het dat niet. Natuurlijk draaide Beijing de duimschroeven van onderdrukking net nog wat meer aan.

Die onderdrukking is niet beperkt tot China, Hongkong en Macau. Zelfs in onze Europese Unie intimideert Beijing de diaspora met illegale politiebureaus. Krankzinnig. Natuurlijk moeten die politiebureaus onmiddellijk op slot. Natuurlijk moeten we onze diaspora beschermen. En natuurlijk moeten we de Chinese bevolking steunen. Hun hang naar vrijheid is zelfs sterker dan Xi Jinpings onderdrukking. Wij hebben hen gehoord, luid en duidelijk.

(De spreker aanvaardt een 'blauwe kaart'-reactie)

Karen Melchior (Renew), *(blue-card speech).* – Thank you very much. You mentioned that we should not suspend our protection of human rights. How do you see the importance of our urgency resolutions here in the Parliament, in our fight for the human rights across the world?

Thijs Reuten (S&D) *(blue-card reply).* – Thank you for that question dear colleague. I think it's of great importance that we continue to do our work despite what's happening and despite the terrible circumstances that we find ourselves here in this House. And my colleague, Mr Repasi, already referred to that, we need to stand together as Parliament as a whole, together to defend our values in the European Union and to support everyone who's fighting to get the same freedom and the same liberties that we have strived for, for decades. We need to help them. We need to stand by them.

Salima Yenbou (Renew). – Madame la Présidente, «nous allons assouplir les restrictions COVID-19» est une bien belle promesse du gouvernement chinois, qui cache en réalité le renforcement de la répression contre toute forme de dissidence. Nous assistons depuis désormais trois semaines à des faits historiques.

Historiques par leur masse: des milliers et des milliers de manifestants, que nous soutenons, descendant dans les rues d'au moins 27 villes de Chine. Historiques par leur contenu: nous n'avons pas assisté à une telle manifestation politique en Chine depuis Tian'anmen, avec leurs draps blancs contre la censure et leurs revendications, «Xi Jinping, démissionne!» ou «Nous voulons la liberté.»

Dans cette guerre que la Chine dit mener contre la COVID-19, les armes et la répression visent les citoyens chinois. Nous le savons bien: le plus grand ennemi du régime autoritaire de Xi Jinping n'est pas le virus, mais son propre peuple. Or, combien d'autres peuples désirent être libérés du gouvernement chinois? Je pense aux Ouïghours, aux Hongkongais, aux Taïwanais ou encore aux Tibétains. La liste est bien trop longue. Arrêtons enfin ce totalitarisme insupportable. L'Union européenne en a les moyens diplomatiques. Il nous manque malheureusement la volonté politique.

Raphaël Glucksmann (S&D). – Madame la Présidente, chers collègues, la liberté n'a ni nationalité, ni continent. Au cœur même de la plus grande dictature du monde, des milliers de citoyens ont eu le courage de défendre leurs droits fondamentaux et universels. Dans ce premier grand élan de solidarité des Chinois han envers les Ouïgours, martyrisés par le régime, on peut lire ce que le philosophe tchèque Patočka qualifiait de «solidarité des ébranlés». Voilà ce qu'est le courage. Voilà ce qu'est l'amour de la liberté.

Nous, que faisons-nous? Nous, nous acceptons sur notre territoire des commissariats du régime chinois. Nous, nous acceptons que les produits de l'esclavage se déversent dans nos marchés. Nous, nous acceptons que nos multinationales fassent un fric démentiel avec le régime communiste chinois. Nous, nous baissons la tête quand nous parlons à Xi Jinping. Nous devons donc apprendre du courage de ceux qui sont descendus dans les rues de Shanghai.

And now I will continue in English to conclude, to say that it is not because corrupt regimes, autocratic regimes, are corrupting some Members and are trying to destabilise our institutions that we should stop having resolutions condemning corrupt and authoritarian regimes. On the contrary, the more Qatar, Russia and China will start corrupting us, the more we will criticise them. And that is our response to them.

(The speaker agreed to respond to a blue-card speech)

Karen Melchior (Renew), *(blue-card speech).* – Thank you very much, Mr Glucksmann. You mentioned that we should ban the import of forced labour goods into the European Union. How is the production of forced labour goods in China helping to support the Chinese Government also in its crackdown on protests in China?

Raphaël Glucksmann (S&D). *(blue-card reply)* – The fact is that today we are – if we want it or if we don't want it – connected to this crackdown. How? Through the value chain of our companies. Through the export of the goods produced by forced labour.

For instance, if you take things that we need most of all now for the Green Deal, which are solar panels, yes? How are they produced? They are produced by Uyghur slaves. And why? Because we don't produce them ourselves. So that's why it's so important to change, to change the rules of the game so that we can have a market that is free from these goods. If we don't do it, it means we are collaborating with the repression and the crackdown. That is also why we need these resolutions to point the finger when it hurts, where it hurts, and when we want them to be hurt.

Zgłoszenia z sali

Clare Daly (The Left). – Madam President, I'm just constantly amazed by the discussions that go on in here because in the main, what we've been subjected to is a diatribe of anti-Chinese rhetoric, which is of no benefit to anybody living in China.

Of course the people in China are fed up! Lockdowns can't go on forever without serious social and psychological effects, and the extraordinary conditions experienced by factory workers in the Foxconn complex in Zhengzhou, where they produce iPhones, would drive anybody around the bend. They have a right to strike, lockdowns can't be used as an excuse to railroad workers into intolerable exploitation.

But we have to avoid being simplistic. Lockdowns and their effects are not unique to China, we've had them here. It's been clear for a while that China would have to transition, the government has begun that process. They face huge problems with a large unvaccinated elderly population and the risk of a spike in excess mortality in a country of 1.4 billion people.

With our own COVID blunders, it's a bit facile of us leaping to judgement. If we want to be useful, let us internationally cooperate, support and help China's ease from zero COVID.

(Koniec zgłoszeń z sali)

Stella Kyriakides, *Member of the Commission.* – Madam President, honourable Members, we would like to recognise the immense bravery of people across China who recently came out to stand up and express themselves.

It was an exceptional moment for many reasons. Protesters came out despite many risks, ubiquitous mass surveillance, the fear of being pursued afterwards. Protests happen in China, but they are usually local on specific issues. Indeed, these demonstrations followed that of a lone protester with slogans written on white banners ahead of the 20th Party Congress. Worryingly, his whereabouts remain unknown.

But last month's demonstrations happened in at least 12 cities, with people from many walks of life. Images spread on the Internet as quickly as they were captured by surveillance cameras. The protests offered a show of inter-ethnic solidarity, and the fire in Xinjiang, which tragically left at least eight Uyghur Chinese citizens dead.

The triple implications of social instability, economic impact and people's fatigue after almost three years of lockdowns seem to have led the authorities to conclude that the time has come to change the zero COVID-19 policy. The voices of the protesters did not therefore go unnoticed.

No one can anticipate how things will evolve. The public health impacts or what may happen in case of a large scale pandemic outbreak. The challenge is massive, with the risk of grave consequences as case numbers spiral and health systems come under strain.

President Michel shared with President Xi Europe's experience with massive vaccination of all age groups going hand in hand with easing of measures.

Those who chose to stand up and protest showed great courage. Systematic repression of public dissent by state authorities has been raised many times in this chamber. There are reports of security services tracking down protesters. Anyone who had a mobile phone switched on knows they may be traced. Many students were sent home from universities. People who took to the streets may still feel reprisals, especially those who chanted certain slogans or sent images abroad.

Honourable Members, the EU will continue to speak up for the right to freedom of peaceful expression everywhere in the world – that is a fundamental right which must be enjoyed by everyone.

Przewodnicząca. – Zamykam debatę.

Głosowanie odbędzie się w czwartek 15 grudnia 2022 r.

17.2. Niederschlagung friedlicher Demonstrationen im Tschad durch die Militärjunta

Przewodnicząca. – Kolejnym punktem porządku dziennego jest debata nad sześcioma projektami rezolucji w sprawie tłumienia pokojowych demonstracji przez juntę wojskową w Czadzie (2022/2993(RSP))1.

1Patrz protokół posiedzenia.

Hannes Heide, *Verfasser.* – Frau Präsidentin, Frau Kommissarin! Eines gleich vorweg: Wenn wir hier den Schwachen und Entrechteten eine Stimme geben, dann hat das mit Haltung zu tun und mit nichts anderem. Bei Protesten gegen die Übergangsregierung im Tschad wurden bis zu 150 Menschen getötet. Die Zahl der Verletzten ist nach wie vor unklar. Mehr als 1300 Personen wurden verhaftet und gefoltert, 200 sind nach wie vor vermisst. Die meisten Inhaftierten befinden sich 600 Kilometer von der Hauptstadt entfernt im Hochsicherheitsgefängnis Koro Toro unter katastrophalen Verhältnissen bei Temperaturen von über 40 Grad im Sommer und bei null Grad im Winter.

Die Ankündigung seiner eigenen Kandidatur und der Verlängerung einer Übergangszeit von 18 Monaten bis zu Wahlen durch Präsident Mahamat Déby, der seinem getöteten Vater nachfolgte, brachte die Menschen auf die Straße. Das Land ist von schwerwiegenden Grund- und Menschenrechtsverletzungen gezeichnet und mit Korruption, extremer Armut und einer sich ausweitenden Hungersnot konfrontiert.

Die EU muss auf die humanitäre Lage im Land reagieren und den demokratischen Übergang entschieden unterstützen. Eine Untersuchung der gewalttätigen Niederschlagung der friedlichen Proteste ist unbedingt notwendig. Und es bräuchte eine gemeinsame Stellungnahme dieses Hauses, die Unterstützung aller Abgeordneten – und besonders von der größten Fraktion hier in diesem Haus –, um eine klare Botschaft auszusenden, die diese schwachen Menschen, die diese Menschen in dieser Situation auch entsprechend unterstützt.

Pierrette Herzberger-Fofana, *auteure*. – Madame la Présidente, la situation au Tchad est alarmante. Après le décès du président de la République, les militaires ont pris le pouvoir, suspendu la Constitution et dissous l'Assemblée nationale. Des milliers de personnes ont manifesté dans tout le pays pour exiger le retour immédiat à un régime démocratique. La répression a été brutale. La police a répondu aux manifestants en tirant à balles réelles et en lançant des gaz lacrymogènes.

Selon les premières estimations, 50 personnes auraient été tuées depuis le mois d'octobre, mais le chiffre exact est probablement plus élevé. Plus de 1 000 personnes ont été arrêtées et, selon le Comité de l'ONU contre la torture, 400 ont été emprisonnées au centre d'incarcération de Koro Toro, situé en plein désert. La plupart d'entre eux ont été condamnés, par contumace, jusqu'à trois ans de prison. Les conditions dans les prisons sont désastreuses. Selon les derniers rapports, le manque d'équipements de base, comme l'eau potable, est criant. La torture est toujours d'actualité.

La société civile a préparé un plan de transition afin de réinstaurer les structures démocratiques et de sortir de cette situation de crise. Nous ne devons pas abandonner les populations qui sont victimes de violences. Nous devons faire entendre la voix de la société civile, pour soutenir le retour aux structures démocratiques.

Miguel Urbán Crespo, *autor*. – Señora presidenta, lo primero que quería decir es que me parece una auténtica vergüenza que el Partido Popular no esté participando en estos debates. El Partido Popular parece que quiere acabar con las injerencias de terceros países sobre este Parlamento aboliendo los derechos humanos. Parece que el Partido Popular quiere combatir la corrupción aboliendo la democracia. ¿Cuál será la próxima propuesta del Partido Popular? ¿Cerrar el Parlamento? Claro, es lo que estamos viendo.

Hace dieciocho meses este Pleno habló de un golpe de Estado que la Unión Europea no quería reconocer en Chad. Una violencia sobre el pueblo que clamaba democracia. Nos pidieron confiar en el período de transición por la estabilidad en la región. Hoy hemos llegado al final de ese período y ha pasado lo previsible: la Junta Militar y Déby han decidido alargar su dictadura y continuar reprimiendo a su pueblo. Decenas de muertos, de detenidos y de perseguidos. El uso de la fuerza letal contra los manifestantes en Chad es una costumbre.

Mientras esto pasa, la Unión Europea y los Estados miembros, como Francia, han apoyado a la Junta Militar y han mantenido la cooperación con el régimen, incluida la cooperación militar y policial con muertos encima de la mesa. ¿Esto es estabilidad?

Exigimos que se restablezca el orden constitucional y se entregue el poder político a las autoridades civiles y, hasta que esto no pase, que se cese la cooperación con la dictadura de Chad.

Carlos Zorrinho, *em nome do Grupo S&D*. – Senhora Presidente, Senhora Comissária, a repressão violenta das recentes manifestações no Chade levou a que 50 pessoas perdessem a vida e se tivessem contabilizado mais de três centenas de feridos. Destes confrontos resultaram ainda 400 detidos. A maioria dos manifestantes detidos, julgados sem garantias, foram condenados a penas de dois a três anos de prisão. A oposição da sociedade civil manifestava-se contra a prorrogação do período de transição política decretado pela Junta Militar, a qual dissolveu o Parlamento e o governo e prometeu eleições livres e democráticas, após uma tradição de 18 meses renovável apenas uma vez.

O Parlamento Europeu não pode ficar silenciado perante este facto. Por isso, agendamos este debate. Lamento profundamente que o maior grupo político desta Casa, o PPE, não tenha a compaixão, a empatia, a responsabilidade política para se associar a este debate e apoiar a transição democrática que o povo do Chade anseia.

Como membro desta Casa da democracia, não prescindo do meu direito e do meu dever de apelar às autoridades do Chade para que garantam e protejam o exercício dos direitos à reunião e associação pacífica, bem como à liberdade de opinião e expressão dos seus cidadãos no Chade e para que criem condições para uma rápida transição democrática pacífica.

Thierry Mariani, *au nom du groupe ID*. – Madame la Présidente, après l'éclatement de la Libye, après l'abandon de la France et des soldats de l'opération Barkhane, l'Union européenne entreprend désormais de participer à la déstabilisation du Tchad. À Fort-Lamy, le Tchad accueille une base aérienne française. À N'Djamena, il se coordonne avec les forces militaires françaises pour lutter contre les mafias, les groupes djihadistes et les trafiquants d'êtres humains.

C'est vrai, l'Union européenne ne s'embarrasse pas de ces considérations. Pour elle, un pays africain mérite d'être condamné. À mon avis, le Parlement européen est à l'heure actuelle très mal placé pour faire la leçon à un gouvernement qui négocie avec son opposition, sous l'égide – devinez – du Qatar.

Oui, les événements du 20 octobre dernier sont une très dure épreuve pour tous les Tchadiens. Oui, toutes les victimes sont à déplorer et à regretter. Oui, la transformation de ces manifestations en ce que les autorités tchadiennes jugent comme une insurrection a été l'occasion d'affrontements sanglants. Je note cependant que l'Union africaine a refusé de sanctionner le Tchad. Il est urgent que nous renouvelions nos alliances avec les partenaires africains qui ont une tradition de confiance avec la France.

Alors que le Tchad a déclaré l'urgence alimentaire l'été dernier, qu'il fait face à de nombreux défis sécuritaires, au Nord comme au Sud, et qu'il a dû affronter les pires inondations de son histoire, ce nouveau débat, à mon avis, est déplorable. Ouvrez les yeux, mes chers collègues: notre politique idéologique en Afrique est en train d'y effacer nos amitiés et d'y détruire nos intérêts. Votez cette résolution, mais demain, il ne faudra peut-être pas vous étonner que ce vide soit rempli par d'autres pays en Afrique.

Stella Kyriakides, *Member of the Commission*. – Madam President, honourable Members of the European Parliament, what happened in Chad on 20 October is unacceptable. The excessive and disproportionate use of force by the Chadian security forces to repress opposition demonstrations led to the death of at least 50 people – likely more – and over 600 arrests.

Hundreds of detainees, reportedly including minors, are being held in a high-security prison far from the capital. We understand that some of the arrested have been released in the meantime. Trials have started against the detainees and verdicts have already been handed down, often without giving them access to lawyers and in the absence of independent observers. Allegations of serious human rights abuse abound. These are grave breaches of international human rights law and, as such, risk seriously undermining the ongoing political transition.

The EU has been Chad's steadfast partner for years, offering its contribution to help them face their many political, social and economic challenges. Together with our partners and, in particular, the African Union, the EU has supported the transition process that started in 2021 as the basis upon which to build a new social contract in Chad, rooted in the respect of human rights, democratic principles and the rule of law.

In this spirit, the EU has been calling on the authorities, including at the highest level, to shed full light on the events of 20 October and their aftermath, and for the full respect of the right to a fair trial and due process of all the arrested. Only a credible, independent investigation into what happened, in full respect of the rights of detainees, and ensuring accountability and justice for any human rights violations and abuses committed, will rebuild trust in Chadian institutions. This will be crucial to allow the transition process to be credible, inclusive and able to pursue its ultimate goal of building back better for the benefit of the Chadian population.

Przewodnicząca. – Zamykam debatę.

Głosowanie odbędzie się w czwartek 15 grudnia 2022 r.

Oświadczenia pisemne (art. 171)

Dominique Bilde (ID), *par écrit*. – Le 20 avril 2021, Idriss Déby, Président du Tchad, mourait au combat. Son fils, Mahamat Idriss Déby, a assuré dès lors une transition, en dehors des standards démocratiques, ce que l'Union européenne a vu d'un mauvais œil. C'est d'autant plus vrai que cette période de transition a été prolongée et que les manifestations de l'opposition auraient été réprimées. Pour autant, ayant suivi attentivement l'évolution de la conjoncture au Sahel et de l'opération militaire Barkhane menée par la France, je tiens à rappeler le lourd tribut payé par le Tchad contre le terrorisme islamiste. Le Tchad accueille toujours une présence militaire française, notamment sur la base aérienne Fort-Lamy. Alors que le djihadisme gagne du terrain depuis le désengagement de la France, cette charge contre le régime tchadien devrait être quelque peu nuancée, afin de tenir compte de ce contexte. Les principes démocratiques, ainsi que le respect des droits fondamentaux, ne sont évidemment pas négociables. Mais, dans le cas d'espèce, on peut encore espérer que la voie du dialogue et de la diplomatie finisse par porter ses fruits et c'est, du reste, notre meilleure carte à jouer. Je vous remercie.

György Hölvényi (PPE), *írásban*. – A 2021-ben meggyilkolt Idriss Deby elnök kormányzása alatt Csádot viszonylagos stabilitás jellemezte. Mára azonban a cselekvőképes kormány hiánya, a vallási szélsőségesek egyre fokozódó jelenléte és a romló gazdasági helyzet Csád teljes összeomlásával fenyeget. Csád a Föld egyik legszegényebb országa. Szintén nagy kihívást jelent a 450 ezer szudáni, nigériai és közép-afrikai menekült ellátása. A gyenge kormányzat pedig képtelen megakadályozni, hogy a környező országok vallási fanatikusai beszivárogjanak Csádba.

Látnunk kell, hogy a vallási szélsőségesek térnyerése fenyegetést jelent, elsősorban az országban élő keresztények, de más muszlim közösségek számára is, akik csak remélhetik, hogy az állam képes gátat vetni az iszlamista túlkapásoknak. A Száhel régió és így Csád biztonsága és stabilitása az Európai Unió stratégiai érdeke. Különösen most, amikor az Unió keleti határain dúló háború az európai családok gazdasági és energiabiztonságát fenyegeti. Ebben a helyzetben egészen egyszerűen nem engedhetjük meg, hogy a Száhel régió összeomlása újabb, az eddigieknek jóval nagyobb migrációs hullámot indítson el.

Csád stabilitásának helyreállításához elengedhetetlen, hogy minél hamarabb demokratikus választásokat tartsanak. Az Uniónak készen kell állnia arra, hogy segítse ezt a folyamatot. Emellett a biztonság megteremtésében az Európai Uniónak saját eszköztárával támogatnia kell a regionális partnerek kezdeményezéseit, illetve a tagállamok erőfeszítéseit.

17.3. Der Fall des Menschenrechtsverteidigers Abdulhadi al-Chawadscha in Bahrain

Przewodnicząca. – Kolejnym punktem porządku dziennego jest debata nad sześcioma projektami rezolucji w sprawie obrońcy praw człowieka Abdulhadiego al-Chawadży w Bahrajnie (2022/2994(RSP))1.

1Patrz protokół posiedzenia.

Karen Melchior, *author*. – Madam President, it is right and it is important that we in the European Parliament today debate the situation of human rights in Bahrain, especially the situation of Danish-Bahraini citizen, Abdulhadi Al-Khawaja, whose health is in danger because of his imprisonment of 11 years, whose family has only once been allowed to visit him in the last 2 years.

We will not be silenced. And they have tried. Bahrain actively tried to tarnish the reputation of this internationally respected human rights defender to MEPs to stop this debate. I will never remain silent in the face of repression and I will never remain silent if I suspect corruption or undue influence. We must not accept colleagues being unduly influenced to change the wording of our work, or our votes. Even suspicion must not be allowed. It destroys the reputation of our House.

So, colleagues, I will confront you and even your political leadership on this. The Bahraini Government must not be allowed to silence the voices of Bahrain. I condemn the severe continued repression of civic and political space in Bahrain. Bahraini authorities should restore political society to give full civil and political rights to all opposition members. The horrific regime in Iran, close to Bahrain, and Iran's regional influence must not be an excuse to close down democracy and imprison political opponents for years.

Finally, we as the European Union cannot claim to support democracy in the world and export surveillance and repression. Technology from the European Union must never be exported to suppress our core values of human rights and democracy, to silence the voices of human rights. So Member States, you must do more. Every Member State must look critically at the export licenses for European surveillance software under the Dual-use Regulation.

Hannah Neumann, *author*. – Madam President, dear colleagues, in Europe we take the right to freedom of expression for granted, but people in the Gulf region risk their life for it. In Bahrain, human rights defender Abdulhadi Al-Khawaja was sentenced to life in prison because he led pro-democracy protests and is still in prison today and our urgency resolution is about his case.

But his case is by far not the only one in the region: 34 years in prison for PhD scholar Salma al-Shehab in Saudi Arabia for her tweets on women's rights. Life imprisonment for the Qatari lawyers Hazza and Rashed bin Ali Abu Shurayda al-Marri, who had organised so-called unauthorised meetings. Ten years for human rights defender Ahmed Mansoor in the UAE for his social media activism. And lawmakers in Iran have just called on the judiciary to sentence protesters to death. For what? For calling for political freedoms and the freedom of expression, and two of them have already been executed.

So in every encounter with the Gulf region and beyond, we have to speak up on behalf of those who are not allowed to speak up. And we must call for the release of those unjustly detained again and again and again, and especially and continuously in this European Parliament. Because if we are silent, they will be forgotten in their dark prison holes, but theirs are the voices that the world needs to hear.

Evin Incir, *on behalf of the S&D Group*. – Madam President, imagine sitting at home years after years, hoping and praying for your father, husband, or son to enjoy a dinner with you, or just being able to have a good laugh together. These simple things might not be dreams for us, but they are dreams for many people in Bahrain. The family of the Danish-Bahraini citizen Abdulhadi Al-Khawaja has over a decade dreamt what we take for granted.

Today gives us all here in this room the possibility to send a clear message to his family and all other human rights defenders' families that their dreams are our dreams. Today gives us all here in this room the possibility to send a clear message to the cruel regime of Bahrain that human rights are not for selected people to enjoy. Human rights are not if and when: human rights are universal and always. The European Union's – including Parliament's – biggest role is to defend the universal values within the Union and globally.

Colleagues, all prisoners of conscience must immediately be released. Death penalty must be abolished. And the EU officials should always include visit of political prisoners on their programme in Bahrain. The crackdown on the political opposition must end. Therefore we also need to ensure that no surveillance technology of the European Union or the Member States ends up in the hands of the oppressive regime of Bahrain. Enough is enough.

And I must also say that I think that the EPP's boycott of the urgent resolutions on human rights breaches are a shame. Human rights cannot wait.

Maximilian Krah, *im Namen der ID-Fraktion*. – Frau Präsidentin, Frau Kollegin, meine Damen und Herren Kollegen! Das ist jetzt innerhalb eines Jahres das zweite Mal, dass wir uns um einen inhaftierten „XY Unbekannt" in der arabischen Welt kümmern. Einmal war es in den Emiraten. Heute ist es in Bahrain.

Zunächst glaube ich nicht, dass die europäischen Wählerinnen und Wähler tatsächlich Verständnis dafür haben, dass wir unsere Zeit für solche Einzelfälle aufwenden. Das Zweite ist, dass ich mich wundere, dass Sie sich jedes Mal Länder aussuchen, die in der arabischen Welt – die in der Tat Menschenrechtsnachholbedarf hat – als verhältnismäßig liberal gelten. Wir müssen doch einfach auch die Relationen beachten.

Tatsache ist, dass Bahrain seit Jahren ein Partner des Westens und dieser Union ist, dass wir Abkommen geschlossen haben, dass wir Partnerschaft haben. Wieso wird nun ausgerechnet wegen eines Einzelfalls diese Partnerschaft in Frage gestellt? Bahrain kämpft um seine staatliche Existenz. Der Iran akzeptiert die Unabhängigkeit nicht. Und der hier heute so Gelobte war beteiligt an einer Auseinandersetzung, die die staatliche Existenz in Frage gestellt hat.

Ich denke, mehr Vertrauen in unseren Partner und weniger Menschenrechtsimperialismus wäre angezeigt.

Stella Kyriakides, *Member of the Commission*. – Madam President, honourable Members of the European Parliament, human rights represent a core dimension of the EU's engagement with Bahrain and are regularly addressed, including during our annual human rights dialogue with the country as well as by our Member States.

Since the first round of our dialogue with Bahrain in 2016, we have been addressing several areas of concern with regard to the human rights situation; freedom of expression and association, the right to a fair trial, allegations of torture and prison conditions, and the situation of prisoners of conscience are among the points that we raise systematically and consistently with Bahraini authorities.

We have seen progress on certain human rights issues in Bahrain. The fact that healthcare in prisons is now provided by the Ministry of Health instead of the Ministry of Interior and the increasing number of cases for which alternative punishments apply are steps in the right direction. We continue to urge that independent oversight mechanisms are put into place and that the officials are held accountable in cases of torture and ill treatment of prisoners.

The case of Abdulhadi Al-Khawaja is one of the cases we have been actively following, both from Brussels and via the Delegation in Riyadh, accredited to Bahrain. We are regularly insisting on seeking clarifications from the Bahraini authorities on his health and access to medical treatment, as well as details on the judicial process. In doing so, we have constantly reiterated the respect for the UN guidelines on the minimum standards of treatment of prisoners – the Mandela rules – as well as the EU's principled position on freedom of expression and association.

The most recent dialogue held on October 27 in Manama, provided further opportunity to discuss pertinent issues of concern with Bahraini authorities. Moreover, three EU Member State ambassadors present in the country participated in the dialogue as observers. On that occasion, the EU emphasised rule of law as a foundation for our engagement with partner countries. We have also inquired about the conditions in prisons, urging Bahrain to seriously investigate any torture allegations and violations of the right to a fair trial, as well as to extend an amnesty to all currently on death row.

The meeting also allowed raising individual cases, including the one of Al-Khawaja. We pleaded for transparency and openness from the Bahraini side and requested for the possibility for EU Special Representative for Human Rights, E. Gilmore, to visit him and other prisoners of conscience.

In the same vein, the EU Special Representative for Human Rights has been raising the cases of imprisoned Bahraini human rights defenders, with Bahraini authorities, pleading for a release, including on humanitarian grounds.

The EU will remain actively engaged on human rights situations in Bahrain, including on the case of Al-Khawaja. We are confident that intensification of relations with Bahrain could possibly lead to an improvement of the overall human rights situation in the country. For this reason, we will also explore opportunities for sharing EU expertise and best practices in specific human rights-related domains with competent Bahraini authorities.

Moreover, the EU will also work with Bahrain to implement its recently adopted national human rights action plan, which includes specific objectives in the area of the rule of law.

Przewodnicząca. – Zamykam debatę.

Głosowanie odbędzie się w czwartek 15 grudnia 2022 r.

18. Erklärungen zur Abstimmung

Przewodnicząca. – Kolejnym punktem porządku dziennego są wyjaśnienia dotyczące stanowiska zajętego w głosowaniu.

18.1. Zukunftsaussichten der Zweistaatenlösung für Israel und Palästina (RC-B9-0552/2022, B9-0552/2022, B9-0553/2022, B9-0554/2022, B9-0555/2022, B9-0556/2022, B9-0557/2022)

Ustne wyjaśnienia dotyczące głosowania

Miriam Lexmann (PPE). – Madam President, I welcome today's vote on the two-state solution for Israel and Palestine. We must continue to work with our allies, especially the United States, to continue supporting durable peace between Israel and the Palestinians, but also across the regions through the Abraham Accords.

However, let me also stress the importance of education in building durable peace based on respect and tolerance. Hatred, incitement to violence and antisemitism are in conflict with European values and are a key impediment to the resolution of the conflict. That's why I would like to stress that all schoolbooks and school materials supported by the Union funds, including those used by UNRWA, must be in line with the UNESCO standards of peace, tolerance, coexistence and non-violence. EU funding must be suspended if clear and substantiated evidence of misuse is presented.

Przewodnicząca. – Zamykam dyskusję w tym punkcie porządku dziennego.

19. Tagesordnung der nächsten Sitzung

Przewodnicząca. – Informuję Państwa: następne posiedzenie odbędzie się jutro, tj. w czwartek 15 grudnia 2022 r. o godz. 9.00.

Porządek obrad został opublikowany. Jest dostępny na stronie internetowej Parlamentu Europejskiego.

20. Genehmigung des Protokolls der laufenden Sitzung

Przewodnicząca. – Protokół dzisiejszego posiedzenia zostanie przedłożony Parlamentowi do zatwierdzenia jutro, wczesnym popołudniem. W związku z tym to był ostatni punkt naszego porządku w dniu dzisiejszym. Zamykam posiedzenie, życząc Państwu dobrej nocy.

21. Schluss der Sitzung

(Posiedzenie zostało zamknięte o godz. 22.01)

Donnerstag, 15. Dezember 2022

AUSFÜHRLICHE SITZUNGSBERICHTE VOM 15. DEZEMBER 2022

(2023/C 292/04)

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Donnerstag, 15. Dezember 2022

AUSFÜHRLICHE SITZUNGSBERICHTE VOM 15. DEZEMBER 2022

VORSITZ: NICOLA BEER

Vizepräsidentin

1. Eröffnung der Sitzung

(The sitting opened at 9.05)

2. 30. Jahrestag der Erklärung der Vereinten Nationen über die Rechte von Personen, die nationalen oder ethnischen, religiösen und sprachlichen Minderheiten angehören (Aussprache)

Die Präsidentin. – Als nächster Punkt der Tagesordnung folgt die Aussprache über die Erklärung der Kommission zum 30. Jahrestag der Erklärung der Vereinten Nationen über die Rechte von Personen, die nationalen oder ethnischen, religiösen und sprachlichen Minderheiten angehören (2022/3000(RSP)).

Stella Kyriakides, *Member of the Commission*. – Madam President, the EU is a strong proponent and supporter of the fundamental values in the EU and the Declaration on Minority Rights, whose 30th anniversary we are marking today.

Respect of the rights of persons belonging to minorities is one of the founding values of the European Union, and is a principle explicitly mentioned in the Treaty on European Union. Any discrimination on the basis of ethnic origin, language, religion or belief, as well as membership of a national minority, is explicitly prohibited under Article 21 of the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights.

Defending minority rights is today more important than ever. We are seeing a backlash against the universality of human rights, against intercultural and multi-ethnic coexistence by opportunists, using us-against-them ideologies, fuelling hate speech against minorities, and demonising cultural or ethnic differences as a means to divide societies and further their political goals. The Commission ensures that fundamental rights and the right to non-discrimination are respected when EU law is implemented. Within the remit of its competences the EU is well equipped with legislative instruments, including the Racial Equality Directive, the Employment Equality Directive – which prohibits discrimination on grounds of religion or belief – and the framework decision on combating racism and xenophobia by means of criminal law.

The EU anti-racism action plan sets out a series of measures to step up action and bring together stakeholders at all levels to address racism more effectively within the EU. The action plan is intended to tackle racism and racial discrimination across society through fair policing, protection, education and remembrance, funding in areas such as labour market, social protection, healthcare and housing, fighting against extremism and hate speech, and improving data collection about instances of discrimination.

The EU's equality agenda can have a direct impact on minorities of all kinds. For instance, the EU-Roma strategic framework for equality, inclusion and participation aims at promoting equality, social, political, cultural and economic inclusion of all Roma people. The Commission adopted its first ever EU strategy on combating anti-Semitism and fostering Jewish life that aims to support and complement EU Member States' efforts in their national action plans to combat anti-racism and anti-Semitism.

The Commission has appointed a special envoy for the promotion of freedom of religion or belief outside the EU. The special envoy will establish a dialogue with national authorities and stakeholders in countries suffering from discrimination on the grounds of religious belief. The Commission is also in the process of appointing a coordinator for the fight against anti-Muslim hatred.

In its response to the European Citizens' Initiative on the Minority SafePack, which was communicated on 14 January 2021, the Commission explained how it is implementing several Council recommendations and other policy documents which together represent a substantial set of measures in favour of minorities. In this respect, I mention the funding programmes in the areas of culture and education, which are fully accessible for regional or minority languages.

As regards EU funding more generally, the EU has reinforced the rules for compliance with fundamental rights and EU funds. The new common provision regulations setting out the rules for the next budget of 2021-2027 contains an enabling condition relating to the Charter. This requires Member States to take steps to ensure compliance with the Charter of Fundamental Rights when disbursing the EU structural funds.

The Horizon Europe programme – the biggest framework programme for research and innovation – dedicates a specific cluster on culture, creativity and inclusive society with a focus, among others, to protect languages as part of Europe's cultural heritage for the first time. And I would say that in this context, significant attention will be devoted to research activities such as safeguarding minority, regional and local languages.

Loránt Vincze, *on behalf of the PPE Group*. – Madam President, dear Commissioner Kyriakides, minorities have been frequently subjected to restrictions and even suppression. This was true in the past and it is still true today. The UN declaration has lost nothing of its relevance. Minorities are often instrumentalised in the most violent internal conflicts. In extreme cases, they were subject to some of the worst atrocities ever committed, instead of being treated as equals and partners for peace and stability.

Given the occasion of the 30th anniversary, the European Parliament should have adopted the resolution supporting the UN engagement and action, and I am sorry that it did not do so. On Monday, probably driven by unfounded fears and outdated reflexes from national politics, the S&D, Renew and ID Groups voted overwhelmingly against the EPP proposal for the adoption of a resolution in Parliament.

What is the cynical message they sent? They have turned their back on the Rohingya, subject to unimaginable cruelty and expulsion in Myanmar. They have betrayed the Yazidis and the Kurds, our partners in the fight against ISIS. They have abandoned the Uyghurs and the Kurds, the Tibetans locked in labour camps in China. Violence against minorities in Ethiopia, South Sudan, Syria and Yemen was of no relevance either.

But the message was disappointingly clear for the minorities in the EU as well, including the Roma – 40 million Europeans in total. It sends them the message: your rights are not worth the effort. Respect for the rights of minorities in the EU and beyond was and still is a matter of utmost importance and urgency. It is also about the credibility of our Parliament's external action. I hope next time this House will be up for the task.

Juan Fernando López Aguilar, *en nombre del Grupo S&D*. – Señora presidenta, comisaria, se cumplen treinta años de la Declaración sobre los derechos de las personas pertenecientes a minorías nacionales o étnicas, religiosas y lingüísticas por parte de la Asamblea General de las Naciones Unidas.

Es evidente que, pasados estos treinta años, hay millones y millones de personas pertenecientes a minorías que siguen sufriendo asimilación forzada, persecución, prejuicios, discriminación, estereotipos, odio y violencia.

Y la Comisión de Libertades, Justicia y Asuntos de Interior se preocupa singularmente por esa presión sobre personas pertenecientes a minorías en los procesos de inmigración y asilo: apátridas, menores, personas especialmente vulnerables y, cómo no, las mujeres pertenecientes a minorías, siempre perjudicadas de manera singular por la violencia de género, por violencia de todo tipo y, por tanto, por agresiones inasumibles a sus derechos fundamentales y a su dignidad.

Y, por eso, las Naciones Unidas siguen insistiendo en la necesidad de que la Unión Europea muestre liderazgo político, de acuerdo con los valores proclamados en el artículo 2, que prohíben especialmente la discriminación por pertenencia a minorías y que, además, incluyen como un valor fundamental de la Unión Europea la protección de las minorías.

Y, por eso, el Parlamento Europeo aprobó en 2018 una Resolución terminante que exige normas mínimas europeas de protección de las personas pertenecientes a minorías. De modo que el Parlamento Europeo pide legislación, con una definición precisa del concepto europeo de minorías y los estándares de protección, que serán, por tanto, exigibles a todos los Estados miembros de la Unión Europea.

Este será un modo de honrar este 30.º aniversario de la Declaración de las Naciones Unidas sobre los derechos de las personas pertenecientes a minorías.

Maite Pagazaurtundúa, *en nombre del Grupo Renew.* – Señora presidenta, señora comisaria, efectivamente, hace treinta años de esa declaración y dos años desde que debatimos, en esta misma Cámara, sobre los derechos de las personas pertenecientes a minorías. Yo dije entonces, y lo repito hoy, que la protección de las minorías y de los más vulnerables —y, por supuesto, la protección y promoción de la diversidad lingüística— es y tiene que seguir siendo una prioridad creciente. Esta protección solo puede lograrse con la defensa de una sociedad en la que seamos libres e iguales en derechos y libertades. La promoción de la diversidad lingüística debe enmarcarse también en esta idea.

En la Resolución sobre derechos de las minorías aprobada en esta Cámara, justamente hace dos años, dijimos cómo hacerlo. Los derechos lingüísticos deben respetarse siempre y promocionarse en consonancia con las leyes, de forma que se respeten los derechos fundamentales de todas las personas, sin ningún tipo de discriminación. Creo que es tiempo de entender la identidad como riqueza compartida, no como dogma, y de promover lenguas y culturas de forma abierta, en una Europa sin policías del pensamiento ni de la identidad, sin discriminación, como digo, con ciudadanos. Una Europa abierta, una Europa con personas libres e iguales.

Feliz Navidad.

François Alfonsi, *au nom du groupe Verts/ALE.* – Madame la Présidente, Madame la Commissaire, chers collègues députés, à l'instigation de l'intergroupe «Minorités traditionnelles, communautés nationales et langues» du Parlement européen, les groupes PPE et Verts/ALE avaient proposé qu'une résolution sur les droits des minorités soit soumise au vote du Parlement à l'occasion du 30e anniversaire de la Déclaration des Nations unies sur les droits des personnes appartenant à des minorités nationales ou ethniques, religieuses et linguistiques. Les autres groupes n'ont pas appuyé cette demande, et, lors du vote sur notre ordre de jour de session, une majorité très étroite a été dans leur sens: deux voix d'écart seulement. Je le regrette.

Je pense que cette question des minorités, depuis que les Nations unies ont adopté cette déclaration, est gravement sous-estimée par les institutions européennes, y compris par notre Parlement. Dans les années 1990, plusieurs textes ont été élaborés et votés dans ce Parlement et au Conseil de l'Europe, comme la Charte européenne des langues régionales et la Convention-cadre pour la protection des minorités nationales. Ces textes ont participé à la définition des critères de Copenhague, qui fondent depuis 1993 le socle des valeurs de l'Union européenne. Malheureusement, ces deux décennies ont érodé l'intérêt pour ces thématiques essentielles à la cohésion de l'Union européenne et au respect de ce qui en est la devise, «Unie dans la diversité».

Pourtant, comment ignorer l'importance de ces questions à l'international, comme en Syrie et en Iraq, où l'État islamiste avait fait de la persécution des minorités religieuses et ethniques l'essentiel de ses méfaits, à propos de l'Arménie et du Haut-Karabakh, au Sahel, où les conflits ethniques expliquent l'essentiel de l'emprise gagnée par les islamistes de Daech, en Éthiopie, ou encore pour les Ouïghours en Chine? Le recul de l'Union européenne sur ces questions affecte à mon sens la bonne appréhension de ces conflits par notre Service européen pour l'action extérieure comme par la plupart des diplomaties européennes.

À l'intérieur de l'Europe, ces questions sont tout autant d'actualité. Les critères de Copenhague ne sont toujours pas ratifiés par un pays comme la France. Le rapporteur spécial des Nations unies a encore récemment déploré la censure d'une loi adoptée pour l'enseignement des langues régionales. Les raisons viennent de loin. Elles viennent de l'histoire conflictuelle des États, à laquelle la construction de l'Europe veut apporter une réponse durable. Or, le recul sur ces thèmes est sensible, et il compromet la stabilité de l'Union.

Je veux notamment attirer l'attention sur les décisions déplorables qui sont prises en ce moment dans certains pays contre les minorités russophones, en raison de l'action de Vladimir Poutine. Il faut veiller à empêcher ce type de mesures qui, loin de construire la paix, risquent d'accroître les problèmes. Voilà le débat qui est en jeu. Je ne doute pas que le Parlement s'en emparera pleinement à l'avenir.

Silvia Sardone, *a nome del gruppo ID*. – Signora Presidente, onorevoli colleghi, è giustissimo discutere dei diritti delle persone che appartengono alle minoranze etniche e religiose e garantire loro impegno per il rispetto dei diritti umani.

Però bisogna essere onesti: per troppa ideologia vi siete concentrati a favorire risoluzioni, fondi, campagne comunicative solo per determinate comunità. Parliamo da anni del problema islamofobia, secondo cui per voi c'è un razzismo verso i musulmani, ma i veri perseguitati nel mondo sono i cristiani, di cui però nessuno parla.

Sono oltre 360 milioni nel mondo i cristiani perseguitati a causa della loro fede. Nel 2021 6 000 cristiani sono stati uccisi per motivi religiosi. Ne vengono ammazzati 16 ogni giorno. Aumentano anche le chiese attaccate, sono oltre 5 000.

La verità è che l'Unione europea e l'ONU non aprono gli occhi su un dramma che ci riguarda direttamente. Forse, ho pensato, tanti di voi erano più interessati a favorire il Qatar, che punta all'islamizzazione dell'Europa.

Margarita de la Pisa Carrión, *en nombre del Grupo ECR*. – Señora presidente, señorías, el objetivo de la Declaración es que personas pertenecientes a minorías puedan contribuir a la estabilidad social y política de los Estados, para servir al bien común y de la persona. No al interés general o de las mayorías, como se dice ahora. Siempre en un afán de encontrar armonía y no enfrentamiento.

Sin embargo, este derecho de las minorías se está utilizando como arma arrojadiza para generar división, por ejemplo, dando pie a minorías separatistas para que de forma ilegítima pretendan romper la unidad de las naciones, como ocurre en España. O cuando se protege de manera interesada y a veces desproporcionada a unos, pero, en cambio, no a otros, en función de intereses ideológicos.

Es vergonzoso que la comunidad internacional silencie el incesante atentado contra las vidas de las minorías cristianas, cruelmente, injustamente perseguidas por su fe, cuando, además, siempre han constituido un servicio innegable para la sociedad.

En su nombre y en el mío les deseo a todos ustedes una muy feliz Navidad.

Younous Omarjee, *au nom du groupe The Left*. – Madame la Présidente, Madame la Commissaire, je suis issu d'un peuple, le peuple réunionnais, qui a beaucoup souffert, qui est né d'un crime contre l'humanité, l'esclavage, et qui a connu la colonisation, la répression et la négation de sa langue et de son identité. Nous avons, par nos luttes, survécu à cela, mais, de par notre expérience, nous savons ce que signifie ne pas pouvoir parler sa langue, ne pas pouvoir pratiquer sa religion et être sommé de faire le choix entre assimilation ou soumission.

C'est pourquoi, en tant que Réunionnais, je sais ce que vivent aujourd'hui, en Europe, les minorités, qui, dans ce temps réactionnaire et d'exaltation des nationalismes identitaires assumés ou déguisés, paient un lourd tribut.

Dans ce contexte, la protection des minorités est, pour l'Europe, un devoir fondamental. Je pense que c'est un devoir de survie pour une Europe civilisée. Pour le monde, la sauvegarde, aujourd'hui, de la diversité culturelle et de la diversité linguistique – mises à mal, comme toujours, par des processus de domination –, est un enjeu de civilisation.

Javier Zarzalejos (PPE). – Señora presidenta, lamento que este debate no haya concluido con una resolución, como proponía el Partido Popular a través de nuestro colega Loránt Vincze. Me parece que, cuando estamos celebrando este 30.º aniversario, este Parlamento no debería haber quedado ausente de un pronunciamiento claro al respecto.

La protección de las minorías no es solo una exigencia de los derechos fundamentales, es una parte fundamental de la arquitectura de la paz en Europa que representa la Unión Europea. Pero es también una parte fundamental de la arquitectura, de la paz y de la seguridad internacionales. La Unión marca estándares globales muy altos, pero tenemos que seguir avanzando en este camino.

Quiero señalar tres cuestiones que me parece importante remarcar en esta ocasión. En primer lugar, que los derechos, como bien dice la ONU, pertenecen a las personas, y que a las personas y a su dignidad tenemos que referirnos cuando hablamos del respeto a las minorías. En segundo lugar, no podemos admitir a quienes se disfrazan de minoría para separar, romper o dividir a las sociedades. Y, en tercer lugar, la identidad no puede ser un elemento de confrontación, ni de lengua, ni de credos, ni de culturas. No puede ser un elemento de confrontación en sistemas políticos democráticos y pluralistas, ni puede limitar o derogar la universalidad de los derechos humanos. Identidad con igualdad. Identidad con lealtad cívica. Identidad con diversidad en convivencia pacífica y democrática.

Doy la bienvenida especialmente al nombramiento de un enviado de la Unión para la Libertad Religiosa, de quien esperamos que lleve nuestras firmes convicciones de la libertad allí donde más se necesitan.

Łukasz Kohut (S&D). – Pani Przewodnicząca! Pani Komisarz! Dwa lata temu, podczas debaty o *Minority Safepack*, po raz pierwszy w historii Parlamentu użyłem języka śląskiego i udowodniłem, że śląski to oddzielny język, a nie żadna gwara języka polskiego.

Historia naszej śląskiej walki ma jednak bardzo wiele płaszczyzn. O uznanie ślonskij godki za język regionalny w Polsce starano się już wielokrotnie – na razie bez rezultatu. Bo zawsze jest coś ważniejszego niż sprawa śląska. Jesteśmy potrzebni tylko wtedy, kiedy są wybory i wtedy, kiedy dostarczamy surowiec – jako nie do końca zrozumiany folklor, gdzieś tam na pograniczu.

A my domagamy się uznania naszego języka. Domagamy się uznania Ślązaków i Ślązaczek za mniejszość etniczną. Wkrótce powstanie w tej sprawie ustawa w Sejmie. Domagamy się edukacji regionalnej w śląskich szkołach. Bo historia Śląska jest inna niż historia Polski. Inna, jak inne są Odra i Wisła.

Uczymy się o stepach akermańskich, a nie uczymy naszych bajtli bogatych historii naszych śląskich miast. Pomija się naszych bohaterów we wszelkich panteonach. Pomija się śląskich noblistów. W zeszłym roku zepchnięto nas do kategorii „Inni" w spisie powszechnym. Jesteśmy banitami, nie chcą, żebyśmy byli sobą.

Dzisiaj, półtora roku po spisie, po ciężkiej pracy, którą wykonałem ze Ślonską Sztamą, nie chcą podać wiela to nos richtig szrajbło ślonsko nacyjo a ślonsko godka. To się dzieje tu i teraz. Czego się boicie? Wielokulturowość to coś pozytywnego. Bo to coś normalnego być Ślązakiem czy Kaszubem i jednocześnie obywatelem Polski. Nie lękajcie się, cytując klasyka.

Yana Toom (Renew). – Madam President, Commissioner, dear colleagues, let me quote a few sentences from the Declaration: 'States shall protect the existence and the national or ethnic, cultural, religious and linguistic identity […]'; '[…] the right to use their own language, in private and in public, freely and without […] discrimination'; '[…] adequate opportunities to learn their mother tongue or to have instruction in the mother tongue'; 'National policies […] planned and implemented with due regard for the legitimate interests of persons belonging to minorities'.

This is awesome. I mean, this is awesome. And I'm really happy to celebrate the 30th anniversary of the Declaration. The only thing which overshadows joy is the fact that being – or I will say staying – Russian from Estonia or Latvia, you have nothing to do with all these wonderful statements. No free use of language, no education, not even due regard.

I know that in some Member States minorities are taken as decent members of the society, but this is not the case everywhere and will not be the case until we as the Union become part of this declaration.

Alice Kuhnke (Verts/ALE). – Madam President, 30 years ago, we agreed that minorities' rights need enhanced protection and promotion, and in only a few weeks' time, Sweden will take over the presidency of the Council, a country with a government that is in practice run by a party established by Nazis in the late 80s.

The European Union has committed to protecting and promoting minorities' rights, but for the next six months the work of the Council will be led by a country – my country – which in area after area is doing the opposite of just that.

I refuse to accept and pretend that the EU stands up for values that we do not implement in reality. In a democracy, the majority has a responsibility to promote and defend minorities' rights. Why are you so many that choose to shy away from that fundamental responsibility?

Mathilde Androuët (ID). – Madame la Présidente, la protection de toutes les minorités, qu'elles soient ethniques, nationales, religieuses ou linguistiques, est fondamentale. Je remarque néanmoins qu'il existe des minorités plus majoritaires que d'autres dans l'agenda médiatico-politique. Cette hiérarchisation est inacceptable. On parle beaucoup des Ouïghours ou des Rohingyas, à juste titre; mais pourquoi, alors, passe-t-on systématiquement sous silence les minorités chrétiennes, dont les membres sont ceux qui subissent le plus de violences dans le monde?

Expulsion des chrétiens afghans par les talibans, tentatives de meurtre de réfugiés chrétiens par des musulmans sur les bateaux de migrants, épuration des Serbes chrétiens au Kosovo, ou encore répression des Arméniens. La liste est encore longue, hélas! Seize chrétiens sont tués chaque jour. Voilà le bilan.

Pendant ce temps, le Parlement européen empêche un débat sur le massacre d'une Nigériane tuée il y a quelques mois, quand la Commission, elle, a mis plus d'un an à nommer un envoyé spécial à la liberté religieuse. Quand on dit protéger les minorités, il est impératif de rester impartial et de ne pas faire son marché en fonction des intérêts politiques du moment.

Carlo Fidanza (ECR). – Signora Presidente, signor Commissario, onorevoli colleghi, a trent'anni dalla dichiarazione delle Nazioni Unite le minoranze religiose sono ancora perseguitate.

Sono ancora sette i paesi al mondo in cui una persona può essere condannata a morte con leggi penali sulla blasfemia, in palese violazione del diritto internazionale: Pakistan, Iran, Afghanistan, Brunei, Mauritania, Arabia Saudita e Nigeria.

E proprio dalla Nigeria arriva un'opportunità unica per il mondo: il musicista Yahaya Sharif-Aminu, dichiarato colpevole di blasfemia e condannato a morte per impiccagione nell'agosto del 2020, ha infatti fatto appello alla Corte suprema della Nigeria, contestando la costituzionalità della legge.

Chiediamo al presidente Buhari di abbattere queste leggi ispirate alla sharia e contrarie ai diritti umani delle minoranze religiose, al diritto internazionale e agli impegni della Nigeria a rispettarne i trattati.

Sarebbe un segnale importante sul piano interno, contro le milizie islamiste che insanguinano il Paese, e sul piano internazionale, verso tutti gli Stati che utilizzano le leggi antiblasfemia per colpire le minoranze religiose.

Andrea Bocskor (NI). – Elnök Asszony! Harminc éves az ENSZ kisebbségi jogokról szóló nyilatkozata, de azóta sem történt sok előrelépés a kisebbségi jogok tekintetében. Fontos lenne, hogy az őshonos nemzeti és nyelvi kisebbségek jogai ne csak papíron létezzenek, hanem valójában is. Ezért óriási jelentősége lett volna az Európai Bizottság által elutasított Minority SafePack-nek. Az európai döntéshozók azonban kettős mércét alkalmazva, csak egyes kisebbségek problémáit vizsgálják nagyító alatt.

A nyilatkozat évfordulója jó lehetőség, hogy a nehéz időket élő kárpátaljai magyar közösségre jobban odafigyeljünk. A kárpátaljai magyarok elítélik az orosz agressziót, a vérontást, a rombolást, és részt vesznek Ukrajna védelmében. Mindenki megszenvedi a háború borzalmait és következményeit, de az áramszünetek közepette is kitartanak szülőföldjükön, küzdenek a megmaradásért, és támogatják az ország háborús régióiból ide menekülő nőket és gyermekeket. Az Ukrajnában élő magyar kisebbség fő törekvése megegyezik az EU tagjelölti státusz egyik feltételével, hogy a Velencei Bizottság ajánlásaival összhangban meghozott törvénnyel garantálják a kisebbségi jogokat, és tartsák tiszteletben a szülőföldjén békében élni akaró közösséget.

Seán Kelly (PPE). – *A Uachtaráin,* 30 years have passed since the adoption of the Declaration on the Rights of Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities, and it continues to be the UN's most important instrument for minorities' rights. It provided the essential framework to ensure that minorities' voices can be heard and for diversity to be embraced.

'United in diversity' remains one of the main pillars of European values. While in many ways we have been successful in upholding these values, it is the unfortunate truth that there is still much work to be done. Individuals from various minority groups still face discrimination, harassment and exclusion on a daily basis, and this is horrible. Although it is important to celebrate this incredible milestone today, we must also ensure that it is being implemented effectively and that any gaps in its implementation are filled.

On the topic of linguistic minorities, I would also like to shed light on my own country, Ireland. Earlier this year, Irish gained full status as an official EU language. *Gaeilge* is the official first language of the Irish State, but unfortunately holds no official status in Northern Ireland. Irish is the language of Ireland and in my view it should be awarded the status to reflect this on the whole island. *Is linne an Ghaeilge.*

Go raibh maith agat. Nollaig shona.

Evin Incir (S&D). – Madam President, colleagues, the rights of persons belonging to national, ethnic or religious and linguistic minorities are an essential part of fully fledged democracies. Their protection and rights are an integral part of upholding the universal human rights.

But even after 30 years of the UN declaration, the EU and its Member States have a long way to go to ensure that minorities are protected, and their rights are defended. A society's well-being is judged by how we treat our whole population, especially how we treat minorities. We could even start looking at ourselves here in this European Parliament and other EU institutions. We talk about 'united in diversity' as our slogan, as our flagship, but what I see is a lack of diversity.

We need to strengthen the protection of minority rights all across the European Union, and we also need to promote them globally. Anyone who belongs to a national minority must have the right to learn, develop and use their minority language. The authorities must listen to the national minorities and take their needs into account. The parties must become more inclusive because only through inclusiveness, we ensure that each and every person in the European Union also in practice can become a part of society and make their voice heard. Unfortunately, we see this discrimination in all parts of our society. We need to end the discrimination and we need to defend, promote and respect the rights of minorities.

Izaskun Bilbao Barandica (Renew). – Señora presidenta, señora comisaria, unirnos en la diversidad implica reconocimiento y respeto. Fabrica convivencia. Previene conflictos.

Hoy tenemos que lamentar que en la Unión hay diversidad, culturas y lenguas minorizadas, que padecemos discriminaciones impensables contra nacionalidades, lenguas o culturas identificadas con un Estado; minorías, como la vasca, que estuvieron desde el principio en la fundación del proyecto europeo.

Ignorar este problema, resolverlo a sentenciazos, cuya nula relación con el Derecho denuncian muchos expertos, es un error. Golpear a ciudadanos que quieren votar, encarcelar a promotores de debates parlamentarios, revela miedo y ausencia de proyectos sólidos y quiebra de principios democráticos básicos.

La innovación política, la proximidad, la cooperación, la participación, la eficiencia que aporta reconocer estas realidades son soluciones y no problemas para nuestra Unión. La segunda propuesta más apoyada en la Conferencia sobre el Futuro de Europa proponía un mecanismo para resolver con diálogo, empatía y política los conflictos que nacen de reprimir esta diversidad. La experiencia ha demostrado el rotundo fracaso de otras recetas.

Romeo Franz (Verts/ALE). – Frau Präsidentin, sehr geehrte Kolleginnen und Kollegen! Eines der in der Erklärung verkündeten grundlegenden Ziele besteht darin, die Achtung der Menschenrechte und der Grundfreiheiten für alle zu fordern. Es werden Maßnahmen zur Förderung der Identität von Minderheiten verlangt. Es wird ausdrücklich gefordert, Maßnahmen zu ergreifen, um die Kenntnis der Geschichte der Minderheiten zu fördern. Angehörige von Minderheiten sollten angemessene Möglichkeiten haben, ihre persönlichen Erfahrungen zu teilen, um gegenseitiges Verständnis und Vertrauen zu fördern. Dazu gehört auch eine angemessene Erinnerungskultur.

Durch den Holocaust wurden Hunderttausende Sinti und Roma ermordet, darunter sechs meiner Tanten und Onkel. Es wird Zeit, dass wir zum nächsten Holocaustgedenktag im Parlament zum ersten Mal in unserer Geschichte einen Zeitzeugen oder eine Zeitzeugin mit Romanes-Hintergrund sprechen lassen, solange wir noch die Zeit dafür haben.

Nicolaus Fest (ID). – Frau Präsidentin, Frau Kommissarin, sehr geehrte Kollegen! Im Jahresbericht der Vereinten Nationen über die Lage der ethnischen, nationalen, religiösen oder sprachlichen Minderheiten ist eine Sache auffällig: Problematisch ist die Lage dieser Minderheiten in China, Pakistan, Indien, Kasachstan, Turkmenistan, Sri Lanka, Myanmar sowie in fast allen arabischen und afrikanischen Ländern. Europäische Länder finden sich auffälligerweise nicht in dem Bericht. Zwar wird konstatiert, dass die Roma übermäßig unter COVID gelitten hätten, aber nicht einmal der UN-Bericht kann hierin eine staatliche Diskriminierung sehen.

Anders also, als bei jeder Gelegenheit von linken Parteien hier im Hause behauptet, scheint die Lage der Minderheiten in Europa außerordentlich gut zu sein. Anders ist es allerdings, und das sagt auch der UN-Bericht, mit der Lage der Christen und der Juden in fast allen nichtwestlichen Teilen der Welt. Sie werden überall diskriminiert, verfolgt und getötet. Aber davon will die Mehrheit hier im Haus leider nichts wissen. Sie wehrt sich geradezu zwanghaft, auch nur über das Thema zu reden, so wie in der Plenarsitzung im November, als Sie die Christenverfolgung nicht auf der Tagesordnung haben wollten.

Wer damals gegen die Aufnahme in die Tagesordnung stimmte, nun aber die Diskriminierung von Minderheiten beklagt, ist ein Heuchler. Liebe Kollegen hier von dem gesamten linken Block, das gilt vor allem für Sie. Man hat ja den Eindruck, wenn es um diese Fragen geht, sind nicht nur sechs Sozialisten von Katar bestochen worden, sondern die ganze linke Hälfte hier des Hauses.

Dass sie jetzt zu Weihnachten über die Minderheitenrechte reden wollen, aber die Rechte der größten verfolgten Minderheit seit Jahren konsequent negieren, ist eine einzige Schande.

Clara Ponsatí Obiols (NI). – *(The speaker spoke in a non-official language)*

President. – Sorry, Ms Ponsatí Obiols…

Clara Ponsatí Obiols (NI). – Yes, my words cannot be translated because they were in Catalan. Millions of European citizens are being treated, even in this Parliament, as second-class European citizens – we're second class, yes. And in the meantime, Spanish MEPs come to this microphone and speak about diversity and how languages unite. No, this is cynicism and it's intolerable.

The truth is that the European Union underpins the position of national majorities in each Member State and works against, not in favour, of regionalised minority groups. Until we get self-determination in the European Union, our rights will not be respected.

Isabel Benjumea Benjumea (PPE). – Señora presidenta, iba a utilizar mi minuto y medio para denunciar —y no quiero dejar de hacerlo— las persecuciones de los cristianos en el mundo y para apelar a la Comisión a que no mire a otro lado ante las masacres constantes que hay a las minorías religiosas, en este caso a los cristianos, a lo largo del mundo, sobre todo en una institución como el Parlamento, una institución de la Unión Europea donde constantemente estamos diciendo que estamos unidos en la diversidad.

Y no quiero dejar de alzar la voz para decir que hay que dar cobijo, hay que dar protección y hay que denunciar todas y cada una de las matanzas de cristianos que hay en el mundo, muy especialmente ahora que llega el tiempo de Navidad, ya que, tristemente, en años anteriores hemos visto masacres precisamente el día de Navidad.

Pero, lamentablemente, después de escuchar a la señora Ponsatí, no puedo sino denunciar varias cosas.

En primer lugar, la señora Ponsatí es una prófuga de la justicia española. Y lo es precisamente por haber querido alterar el orden constitucional.

En segundo lugar, precisamente, los niños que hablan español y que quieren ser educados en español en Cataluña son justamente aquellos a los que no se les reconoce ese derecho. España es un país maravilloso en el que hay muchas lenguas cooficiales, pero, en algunos territorios de España, familias que quieren educar a sus hijos en español, justo la lengua que compartimos todos los españoles, simple y llanamente no pueden hacerlo. Reciben todo tipo de acosos y reciben todo tipo de impedimentos para poder ejercer un derecho fundamental que es educar a tus hijos en su lengua materna.

Por lo tanto, nada de lo que ha dicho la señora Ponsatí es cierto, y lamento profundamente que se utilice este Parlamento para decir esas cosas.

Feliz Navidad.

István Ujhelyi (S&D). – Elnök Asszony! Én elsősorban egy vagyok a sok magyar családapa közül. Másodsorban európai polgár, egyébként pedig szociáldemokrata politikus. De mind a három minőségemben ugyanazt gondolom, hogy az Európai Unióban – így a modern időkben is – a nemzet kérdése, vagy a nemzeti kisebbségek védelme különösen fontos számunkra. Büszke vagyok arra, hogy a gyönyörű és különleges magyar nyelvemen szólhatok ebben a házban. Ez annak köszönhető, hogy évezredes küzdelmet folytatott a magyarság a fennmaradásáért, és most annak, hogy tagjai vagyunk az európai közösségnek.

De hogy mi lesz a későbbiekben, az nagyban függ attól, hogy tiszteljük-e a nemzeti kérdéseket. Az európai értékek sokszor absztraktnak tűnnek, ki-ki saját íze szerint értelmezi őket. Egy biztos, a tisztelet és az elfogadás alapvető kérdés kell legyen egymás kultúráját, vallását, szexuális orientációját, nemét illetően. De ez a lista nem teljes a nemzeti hovatartozás nélkül. Éppen ezért muszáj jeleznem, hogy nem engedhetjük a populista nacionalizmus fogságába ejteni a nemzeti kérdéseket. Egy hazafi, az védi a nemzeti érdekeket, és nem kihasználja azokat a politikai céljai érdekében.

Salima Yenbou (Renew). – Madame la Présidente, cette année, la Déclaration des Nations unies sur les droits des personnes appartenant à des minorités nationales, ethniques, religieuses et linguistiques fête son trentième anniversaire. C'est l'occasion de rappeler l'engagement qui a toujours été le mien: faire entendre la voix de toutes les minorités, afin de protéger et de renforcer leurs droits les plus fondamentaux.

Ne nous voilons pas la face: le chemin est encore long. Aujourd'hui encore, beaucoup trop de minorités subissent discriminations, exclusion, violence et privation des droits. Je me suis toujours attachée à être la porte-voix des «sans voix» et des minorités du monde entier (Ouïgours, Tibétains, Roms, et toute autre minorité ethnique), et je continuerai toujours à protéger et à défendre la diversité.

Œuvrons pour mettre fin aux violations des droits de toutes les minorités. Pour cela, je milite ardemment en faveur de l'intégration systématique des minorités, en associant des représentants à chaque dialogue et à chaque prise de décision, à toutes les échelles.

La pleine intégration des minorités dans nos sociétés est le seul moyen de garantir un progrès démocratique et sociétal. Travaillons ensemble afin de faire de cette déclaration notre réalité, car, n'en déplaise à certains, nous sommes tous égaux en droits.

André Rougé (ID). – Madame la Présidente, chers collègues, charité bien ordonnée commence par soi-même. Comment évoquer un anniversaire lié aux droits de l'homme avec 6 500 ouvriers morts sur les chantiers du Qatar et le scandale qui en découle et ébranle notre institution? Bien qu'il n'ait pas hésité à vendre ses services à une puissance étrangère, l'un d'entre nous s'érige en donneur de leçons, alors même qu'il n'a rien vu venir concernant ses camarades du groupe socialiste, aujourd'hui derrière les barreaux pour corruption.

Notre collègue voudrait lancer une opération «mains propres», mais quelles explications a-t-il fournies lorsque son ex-femme fut interpellée avec plusieurs millions de dollars dans ses valises? Toujours prompt à jeter l'opprobre sur l'adversaire, qu'a-t-il répondu à M[me] Zourabichvili, présidente du pays dont son épouse était ministre de l'intérieur, qui se demandait si, en sa qualité de mari, il ignorait tout des excès de la police, des tortures dans les prisons et de la situation des droits de l'homme sur place?

Vous nous avez dit, Madame la Présidente, que vous vouliez secouer le Parlement. Alors, faites en sorte, s'il vous plaît, que M. Glucksmann ne puisse plus présider la commission ING2.

Donnerstag, 15. Dezember 2022

Kinga Gál (NI). – Elnök Asszony! 30 éve abban reménykedtünk, hogy az ENSZ nyilatkozata elősegíti majd az európai kisebbségvédelmet is. 2004 óta küzdök az őshonos nemzeti és nyelvi kisebbségek védelméért az Európai Parlamentben. A kisebbségi munkacsoport társelnökeként azóta is azzal szembesülünk, hogy több millió uniós állampolgárt – köztük magyarok százezreit – másodrendű állampolgárként kezelnek az Unió számos tagállamában. Diszkrimináció, jogsértések sokasága, az anyanyelvhasználat korlátozása vagy hiánya ellenére az Európai Bizottság nem kíván ezen kisebbségek jogainak élharcosává válni. Így a kettős mérce áldozatává válnak, kéréseik süket fülekre találnak.

Gondoljunk csak a milliók által támogatott kisebbségvédelmi európai polgári kezdeményezésre, melyeket a bizottság laza kézmozdulattal sepert le az asztalról. Az Európai Bíróság pedig ítéletben erősítette meg ezt a döntést. Pedig nagy szükség lenne végre egy átfogó európai, őshonos nemzeti és nyelvi kisebbségvédelmi keretre. Sajnálatos, hogy az EP még egy állásfoglalást sem kívánt hozni egy ilyen komoly kérdésben.

Gilles Lebreton (ID). – Madame la Présidente, chers collègues, pour la France, la liberté est le droit de tout individu de s'arracher à ses déterminismes biologiques et culturels. C'est pourquoi elle ne reconnaît l'existence d'aucune minorité ni d'aucune communauté qui ferait obstacle entre l'individu et la nation.

À l'inverse, la Déclaration sur les droits des personnes appartenant à des minorités nationales ou ethniques, votée par l'ONU en 1992, veut institutionnaliser ces obstacles. Elle est donc incompatible avec la conception française de la liberté. Son article 1er demande aux États de protéger l'existence et l'identité nationale ou ethnique des minorités vivant sur leur territoire. La France s'efforce au contraire de favoriser l'assimilation des personnes issues de ces minorités à la communauté nationale, qui est la seule communauté qu'elle reconnaît.

En fêtant le trentième anniversaire de cette déclaration, le Parlement européen prouve qu'il est complètement étranger à la tradition politique française. Il confirme ainsi son absence de légitimité à parler au nom du peuple français.

Spontane Wortmeldungen

Rasmus Andresen (Verts/ALE). – Fru Formand! I Europa findes der over 300 forskellige nationale mindretal. Vi burde være stolte over denne store mangfoldighed, der kendetegner EU. Demokrati, retsstatslighed og mindretalsrettigheder kan ikke gradbøjes. Stater, som misbruger mindretal som magtinstrument og samtidig har en problematisk holdning til retsstatslighed, er et problem for vores samfund. Modsat kan man ikke kæmpe for retsstatslighed uden at kæmpe for mindretallenes ligestilling. Det burde være EU's og medlemsstaternes vigtigste mål at ligestille mindretal. Som mindretalsdansker er jeg utrolig skuffet over, at den nye danske regering ikke nævner mindretalspolitik med et eneste ord i deres nye regeringsgrundlag. Det er utroligt skuffende, at EU-Kommissionen ikke tør gå i konflikt med medlemsstaterne. Kære Ursula von der Leyen, kære Kommissær Kyriakides. Det er på tide, det er nu, I skal komme med konkrete forslag for at beskytte vores mindretal.

Pierrette Herzberger-Fofana (Verts/ALE). – Madame la Présidente, les minorités, qu'elles soient ethniques, religieuses ou linguistiques, contribuent à enrichir notre projet européen et non pas à l'avilir. Il est de notre devoir de les protéger, afin que le vivre-ensemble prospère au sein de notre continent.

De nombreuses études ont montré que les minorités, souvent jugées négativement et comparées par la population à la «norme» supposée, sont sujettes à des inégalités et à des discriminations. C'est le cas des minorités d'origine africaine, dont l'histoire et la contribution à la paix, à la fin de la Deuxième Guerre mondiale, sont complètement occultées. Connaissez-vous le nombre d'Africains qui ont péri dans les camps de concentration en Allemagne? Non, absolument pas. Il est inconnu de nos élèves, dont la scolarité dure pourtant douze ans.

Il est donc temps de les réhabiliter et de faire connaître l'histoire de tous les citoyens qui vivent sur notre continent. C'est notre devoir de protéger et de respecter les minorités, et de donner à notre devise, «Unie dans la diversité», toute sa valeur.

(Ende der spontanen Wortmeldungen)

Stella Kyriakides, *Member of the Commission*. – Madam President, honourable Members, the Commission has developed a very solid set of legislation and measures which benefit minorities across Europe and at the same time is mindful that the issues relating to the recognition of the status of minorities and the use of regional or minority languages remains a responsibility of Member States. You can rest assured that the Commission is committed to continuing to protect minorities both within and outside the EU.

President. – I will now give the floor to our colleague Ms Ponsatí Obiols, who has asked to make a personal statement.

Clara Ponsatí Obiols (NI). – Madam President, I just want to reply to lies that we have heard a few minutes ago. They referred to my status and they referred to the supposed persecution of Spanish in Catalan schools. Both are lies.

I participated in a government that organised a referendum and that doesn't please the Spanish authorities. I have always defended myself in the courts of law that have asked me to defend myself. And I'm not a fugitive. I was just part of a democratic government that organised a referendum. A referendum is a situation where people put pieces of paper in boxes. If that is a crime, we should revise the status of Spain as a Member of the Union.

And if you have a hesitation about the status of Spanish in Catalan schools, just go and walk on the streets of Barcelona and try to find the child that does not speak Spanish. And then you try to find the child that speaks good Catalan and that's going to be a lot more difficult.

President. – Thank you, we will take note – it is in the Minutes – but it is up to the Spanish courts to solve that problem.

Die Präsidentin. – Die Aussprache ist geschlossen.

3. 90 Jahre nach dem Holodomor: Anerkennung der Massentötung durch Hunger als Völkermord (Aussprache)

Die Präsidentin. – Als nächster Punkt der Tagesordnung folgt die Aussprache über die Erklärung der Kommission zum Thema „90 Jahre nach dem Holodomor: Anerkennung der Massentötung durch Hunger als Völkermord" (2022/3001(RSP)).

Stella Kyriakides, *Member of the Commission*. – Madam President, honourable Members, the Great Famine of 1932 to 1933, the Holodomor, is one of the major tragedies of the 20th century, which took the lives of so many Ukrainians and other persons across the Soviet Union.

This was highlighted on 26 November at the 90th anniversary of the Holodomor, honouring the memory of Ukraine's victims. Ninety years after the Holodomor, Russia is again using food as a weapon in the brutal war of aggression against Ukraine, by destroying Ukraine's agricultural production, mining its fields and blocking its ports.

Today, the European Union stands together with Ukraine in the pursuit to help avert hunger across the world. We support Ukraine's newly launched initiative, 'Grains for Ukraine', which testifies to our joint solidarity with the global efforts to fight hunger caused by Russia's war of aggression.

Our EU-Ukraine Solidarity Lanes continue to be essential corridors for Ukraine's agricultural and other exports and imports, bringing income to Ukraine and to its economy. We strongly support the UN-backed Black Sea grain deal. Together with our Solidarity Lanes, they are allowed to export more than 30 million tonnes of grains and other food-stuffs.

With hindsight, we can draw some more positive lessons from Holodomor. It reminds us that such a tragedy can only be possible in a world in which respect for human rights and the rule of law and democratic principles is absent. The European Union itself was built out of the ashes of war and different experiences of totalitarianism, and yet these same tragedies have shaped and driven the extraordinary achievements of a united Europe over the past 60 years.

Today, Ukraine is transformed as well – as an independent state, as a member of the Council of Europe and as a signatory to the European Convention on Human Rights and a number of other international human rights instruments. While our immediate goal is to help Ukraine win the war, we will support Ukraine to also win peace, to become a modern democratic state.

In this regard, Ukraine's EU candidate status is an opportunity. Progress on key reforms could serve a double purpose: strengthening Ukraine's resilience and also helping it advance on its European path as a modern democracy, matching thus the will of the Ukrainian people.

Radosław Sikorski, *on behalf of the PPE Group*. – Madam President, Commissioner, ladies and gentlemen, let us be clear about what happened in the 1930s. It wasn't a natural disaster. There was first the collectivisation, and then Stalin blamed the victims. And throughout that time, the Soviet Union was exporting grain. What happened was that internal troops, NKVD, was sent to Ukraine, surrounded places district by district, activists took grain and all the food that there was away from the peasants and then, while surrounded, the troops waited until everybody died – up to 5 million people. I commend to you the definitive work on this subject, Red Famine by Anne Applebaum, who happens to be my wife.

There was famine in other parts of the Soviet Union, but in Ukraine it was accompanied by a vicious purge of the bearers of Ukrainian culture in the cities as well, up to 200 000 people. And the reason why it's important to commemorate this is that Putin is trying to do by somewhat similar means the same thing again, namely to reduce the Ukrainian nation to the status of Russian folklore, but to deny Ukraine the right to exist as a separate culture, separate nation, and a separate functioning, democratic and pro-European state.

This is what we are talking about. So it's very important and couldn't come at a better time that we should pass this resolution. I commend it to the House.

President. – Before we continue, I have an announcement to make. Obviously we have a technical problem with the catch-the-eye procedure at your places. So if you wish to request the floor for catch-the-eye, just raise your hand and we will take your names.

Włodzimierz Cimoszewicz, *w imieniu grupy S&D*. – Pani Przewodnicząca! W XX w. dokonano wielu aktów ludobójstwa. Belgijskie Kongo, Ormianie w 1915 r., japońskie zbrodnie w Chinach, Holocaust, Chiny Mao, Nigeria, Kambodża, Rwanda, Srebrenica i wiele innych. Gazowano ludzi, rozstrzeliwano, ścinano mieczem lub maczetą.

90 lat temu z rozkazu Stalina zastosowano inną metodę. Najprostszą. Postanowiono zabić miliony ludzi, zabierając im wszelką żywność. Późniejsze tłumaczenie, że cały kraj potrzebował żywności, było i jest oczywistym kłamstwem. Nie zabierano części żywności, ale wszystko. Brutalnie uniemożliwiano ludziom przemieszczanie się do innych części Ukrainy.

Ta tragedia była przez długi czas nieznana lub mało znana. ZSRR i jego sukcesorka Rosja nigdy nie potwierdziły tej zbrodni. Nawet w niepodległej Ukrainie przez pewien czas nie był to temat podejmowany przez władze. Ten stan rzeczy zmienił się znacząco, ale nie w pełni. W wielu krajach oddano cześć ofiarom Hołodomoru, uznano też tę zbrodnię za ludobójstwo.

W 90 lat po rozpoczęciu tej zbrodniczej operacji najwyższy czas, żebyśmy także my, tu w Parlamencie Europejskim, reprezentując nasze społeczeństwa, uznali Hołodomor za akt ludobójstwa. Apelujemy do tych, którzy tego jeszcze nie zrobili, by poszli tą samą drogą.

Wzywamy Rosję do jasnego potwierdzenia, że Hołodomor miał miejsce, był skutkiem celowych decyzji władz ZSRR i do przeproszenia narodu ukraińskiego. Wzywamy wszystkich do udostępnienia materiałów archiwalnych, tak aby prawda o Hołodomorze mogła być możliwie najpełniej opisana i wykorzystana w edukacji przyszłych pokoleń.

Dla ofiar Hołodomoru możemy zrobić już tylko jedno: pamiętać o nich.

Petras Auštrevičius, *on behalf of the Renew Group*. – Madam President, Commissioner, dear colleagues, 90 years ago, the Soviet Government's attempts to break the will of the people of Ukraine and other regions, to force them to accept the Soviet regime and the abandonment of private property and agriculture turned into a bloody action: the Holodomor.

The Soviet Government, which called itself socialist, supposedly working for the good of the people, organised the Holodomor by deliberate and systematic measures. It deprived the peasants of their stocks of grain and other foodstuffs, and imposed martial law, inhuman punishments and persecutions. Punishments up to 10 years in a penal colony or in prison awaited the collection of a few ears of grain in the fields. This applied to everyone, including minors.

The Soviet authorities, seeing the enormous number of starving and dying people and entire families dying of starvation, acted cynically and used genocidal methods. Already then, the Soviets resorted to propaganda, hosting foreign journalists favourable to them, who were shown a reality created by deception. This old school of propaganda still exists in Russia today.

Dear colleagues, I welcome the European Parliament's determination to recognise the Holodomor as a genocide against the Ukrainian people. The call for Russia to recognise this crime is equally important. Because only such steps would show that Russian society coming to terms with history, and that it is determined not to repeat such unforgivable mistakes in the future. The social experiments of totalitarian systems based on collective violence, and radical and ideological actions must receive the necessary evaluation and response.

As we commemorate 90 years of the Holodomor, and express our condolences to the victims, let us do our utmost to help Ukraine defeat the Russian aggression, who once again threatens the existence of this brave nation and resilient country.

Viola von Cramon-Taubadel, *on behalf of the Verts/ALE Group*. – Madam President, Commissioner, colleagues, it was acorns and pigeons that Vasyl Sieber's family had to eat to survive the winter; he was six. Olesya Sunopol was 10; she remembers people eating tree bark, frogs and even earthworms. Fedir Putyanskyy remembers a boy admitting to eating the flesh of his own mother, who died of starvation. They were just children when the man-made famine killed millions of Ukrainians.

The Holodomor is not a tragedy of one or two families. It is an attempted extermination of an entire nation by the Soviet regime. Stalin's brigades pillaged Ukrainian villages in search of remaining grain. They were filled with hate towards Ukrainians, fuelled by Soviet propaganda.

We in the European Parliament say 'never again' to the horrendous crimes of the 20th century. Russia tried to write history; 90 years later, Putin is now trying to repeat it. The historic parallel is uncanny. Just like 90 years ago, Russia is stealing the grain from Europe's breadbasket, trying to break the Ukrainian spirit. Just like 90 years ago, war on Ukraine's national identity is fuelled by hateful propaganda and Alexander Solzhenitsyn's word. 90 years ago, Ukrainians died on the very edge of Europe and Europe didn't even notice it. The world didn't even notice it. Today, we have the choice to take notice and act fiercely to avert a tragedy which future generations will never forgive us for.

With today's resolutions, we call on the Russian Federation to recognise the Holodomor as a genocide and apologise for the crimes committed. *Slava Ukraini!*

Nicolaus Fest, *im Namen der ID-Fraktion*. – Frau Präsidentin! Ich war Mitte 20, als ich das Buch *The Harvest of Sorrow* las. Robert Conquest war der erste Historiker, der den Hungerkrieg Stalins gegen die Ukraine ins öffentliche Bewusstsein hob. Seiner Schätzung nach starben Anfang der 30er-Jahre rund zwölf Millionen Menschen an Hunger oder hungerbedingten Krankheiten. Wie unter Historikern üblich, ist über die Zahl der Todesopfer lange gestritten worden. Heute gehen die Experten von rund sechs Millionen aus. Aber es macht das Verbrechen keineswegs kleiner.

Gestritten wird auch über die Frage, ob der Holodomor ein Genozid war oder „nur" die Beseitigung innenpolitischer Gegner. Für die Genozid-Annahme spricht, dass sich der Hungerterror vor allem gegen die Ukrainer wandte, also eine ethnische Komponente hatte. Dagegen spricht, dass auch 1,5 Millionen Kasachen und weitere Volksgruppen betroffen waren und es die Ukraine eben deshalb traf, weil sich die dortige Bauernschaft vehement gegen die Kollektivierung wandte. Beide Seiten haben gute Argumente, aber diese Debatte ist keine für Politiker, sie ist eine für Historiker, und daher ist dieses Haus auch der falsche Platz für solche Diskussionen.

Statt über das Für und Wider eines Genozids zu reden, sollten wir den Fokus lieber auf etwas anderes richten: Sozialismus tötet, egal ob in der nationalen oder internationalen Variante. Sozialismus ist immer verbrecherisch. Er sorgt – wir erleben das gerade wieder – immer für Korruption, für Günstlingswirtschaft und Ämterkauf. Sozialismus ist immer das Gegenteil von Gerechtigkeit, und er ist mörderischer, als jeder Nationalismus es je war. Sozialismus ist der Feind der freien Reise, der freien Berufswahl, der Glaubens- und Gewissensfreiheit. Und er ist der Feind der freien Meinung. Sozialismus ist ein Irrweg, und wer ihm heute noch immer folgt, ist moralisch verkommen. Wenn wir uns auf eine solche Entschließung einigen können, würde ich sie gerne unterstützen.

Dominik Tarczyński, *on behalf of the ECR Group*. – Madam President, it's been 90 years since this horrible tragedy. It's been decades. And Russia is still the same Russia. They committed crimes in Poland. They committed genocide in Poland. They committed genocide in Ukraine 90 years ago and they are still committing crimes like genocide in Ukraine now. Nothing has changed. Nothing.

And 90 years ago, over 90 years ago, 100 years ago, we didn't know what to name it, what to name this crime. As Churchill said, it's the 'crime without a name'. But thanks to a Polish lawyer, Raphael Lemkin, we do know that this is a genocide. Genocide. This is very important. That's why I think this Chamber should commemorate Mr Lemkin, one of the greatest minds of the law in history. And we have to remember that genocide is taking place in Ukraine now.

For so many years, Russia was the aggressor – not only in Poland, not only in Ukraine, not only in Europe. What have we done to stop them? What have we done? Businesses as usual for the last decades – gas, gold, diamonds. And these businesses are still taking place. We have to stop it now. We have to stop it now.

Martin Schirdewan, *im Namen der Fraktion The Left*. – Frau Präsidentin! Der Holodomor ist eines der fürchterlichsten Verbrechen des Stalinismus. Ihm fielen Millionen von Menschen zum Opfer, vor allem in der Ukraine, aber auch im Nordkaukasus, der Wolgaregion, im Süduralgebiet, in Westsibirien und in Kasachstan.

Dieses Verbrechen erwuchs aus der politischen Entscheidung der damaligen Sowjetführung unter Stalin, die Industrialisierung des Landes und die Kollektivierung der Landwirtschaft auch unter Zwang gegen die eigene Bevölkerung durchzusetzen – ein grausames Verbrechen gegen die Menschlichkeit, in jedem Fall und ohne jeden Zweifel, das in Massenhunger und millionenfachem Verhungern gipfelte. Den Opfern aus der gesamten damaligen Sowjetunion erweisen wir die Ehre, den Familien gehört unser Mitgefühl und unser Respekt, und heute erweisen wir hier die Ehre insbesondere den Ukrainerinnen und Ukrainern, die dem Holodomor zum Opfer fielen.

Seit 1948 definiert eine UN-Konvention Völkermord juristisch als Verbrechen, begangen in der Absicht, auf direkte oder indirekte Weise eine nationale, ethnische, rassische oder religiöse Gruppe als solche ganz oder teilweise zu zerstören. Dass die sowjetische Führung unter Stalin gezielt eine Politik des Völkermordes gegenüber der eigenen Bevölkerung und insbesondere den Ukrainerinnen und Ukrainern beging – also den Hunger aus ethnischen und rassistischen Gründen über sie brachte –, ist jedoch unter Wissenschaftlern, unter Historikerinnen und Historikern wenigstens umstritten. Industrialisierung, Zwangskollektivierung, Entkulakisierung betrafen viele Nationalitäten der Sowjetunion.

Meine Kritik an der vorliegenden Entschließung, aber auch an dieser Debatte hier bezieht sich vor allem auf die Vermengung der stalinistischen Geschichte mit der grausamen Gegenwart des russischen Angriffskriegs. So werden wir weder der historischen Verantwortung gerecht, die sich aus der komplexen Geschichte Europas im 20. Jahrhundert speist, noch kommen wir einer Beendigung des verbrecherischen Krieges Russlands gegen die Ukraine näher.

Λευτέρης Νικολάου-Αλαβάνος (NI). – Κυρία Πρόεδρε, τα ιστορικά δεδομένα δεν αμφισβητούνται. Η λεγόμενη γενοκτονία του ουκρανικού λαού που υιοθετείται ήταν μια καλά επεξεργασμένη ναζιστική συκοφαντία που διασπάρθηκε στη συνέχεια από φιλοναζί μεγιστάνες του Τύπου, όπως ο Hearst, και φασιστικές συμμορίες, όπως του Bandera. Στην Ουκρανία, στη Ρωσία, το 1930-1932, όντως υπήρχε ξηρασία, υπήρχε λιμός, τύφος. Κρύβετε, όμως, ότι οι μεγαλοαγρότες καπιταλιστές σαμποτάρισαν τη συγκομιδή, τις αποθήκες, τα μηχανήματα, δολοφόνησαν στελέχη του σοσιαλιστικού κράτους, επιτείνοντας το πρόβλημα. Βεβαίως, δεν έχουν σχέση τα πραγματικά θύματα με τα αστρονομικά νούμερα της ευρωατλαντικής ψευδολογίας. Ταυτίζετε την καπιταλιστική Ρωσία, την απαράδεκτη εισβολή της στην Ουκρανία, με τη Σοβιετική Ένωση. Χρησιμοποιείτε αθλιότητες, κλιμακώνετε αντικομμουνιστικά νομοθετικά εκτρώματα, όπως στην Πολωνία, ενώ από κοινού, ευρωατλαντιστές και Ρωσία, υιοθετείτε αυτά τα μυθεύματα, παρά το μεταξύ σας ιμπεριαλιστικό σφαγείο στην Ουκρανία. Δεν «φτιασιδώνεται» η καπιταλιστική βαρβαρότητα με διαστρεβλώσεις και ψέματα. Η αλήθεια θα λάμψει, οι λαϊκές κατακτήσεις του σοσιαλισμού είναι φάρος που φωτίζουν τον δρόμο για έναν κόσμο χωρίς εκμετάλλευση, κρίσεις, πολέμους και προσφυγιά.

Spontane Wortmeldungen

Александър Александров Йорданов (PPE). – Г-жо Председател, обръщам се от Европейския парламент към депутатите от българския парламент, към президента и правителството на моята страна България и ги призовавам да признаят гладомора в Украйна за геноцид и престъпление срещу човечеството, осъществени от престъпната съветска комунистическа партия. Призовавам ги също така да престанат да участват в кремълския сценарий за дестабилизация на България.

Отдавна е време да бъде обявен за персона нон грата посланикът на Русия в България, която се намесва във вътрешните работи на моята страна. Отдавна е време и да бъдат премахнати всички съветски и комунистически паметници, които унижават достойнството на българския народ. Днес Русия отново осъществява терор и геноцид в Украйна. Поклон пред милионите жертви на гладомора! Слава на Украйна!

(Ende der spontanen Wortmeldungen)

Stella Kyriakides, *Member of the Commission*. – Madam President, honourable Members, the debate today testifies to our continued engagement to keep alive the sad memory of Holodomor. The innocent lives it claimed are not forgotten. It is vital that we prevent such tragedies from happening again.

Let me stress once again that the EU will continue to act and prevent efforts to use hunger as a weapon. The European Union remains an active and responsible actor. We stand in solidarity with Ukraine and with the global efforts to fight the hunger caused by Russia's war of aggression. And we should also be firm in fighting Russia's lies that the European Union is responsible for the rise in food prices.

Die Präsidentin. – Die Aussprache ist geschlossen.

Die Abstimmung findet heute, Donnerstag, 15. Dezember 2022, statt.

Schriftliche Erklärungen (Artikel 171)

Andrea Bocskor (NI), *írásban*. – Holodomor, vagyis éhhalál, az ukrán nép történetének talán egyik legnagyobb tragédiája. A 90 évvel ezelőtt történt, 1932 áprilisától 1933 novemberéig tartó mesterséges éhínség több millió ukrán életét követelte, akiknek egyetlen bűne a nemzetiségi hovatartozásuk volt. Az ukrán nép kiéheztetése valójában egy Sztálin parancsára végrehajtott népirtás volt. A világon több mint 20 ország, köztük Magyarország, ismerte el a holodomor szörnyűségeit népirtásnak.

Mi magyarok is megszenvedtük a sztálini diktatúra kegyetlenségeit, így értjük az esemény tragikumát. 1944 őszén a szovjet csapatok megszállták Kárpátalját, és mintegy harmincezer 18 és 50 év közötti magyar nemzetiségű férfit deportáltak hadifogolytáborokba, közülük több mint tízezren sosem térhettek haza. A magyar nemzetiségű férfiakat három napig tartó helyreállítási munkára toborozták össze, a nép nyelvén „málenkij robotra", ám a kis munka helyett kényszermunka-táborokba internálták őket, ami egyértelmű etnikai tisztogatás volt.

Azokat az áldozatokat sem rehabilitálták a mai napig, bocsánatot sem kértek tőlük. A „málenkij robot" és a holodomor áldozatai is a sztálini diktatórikus rendszer elszenvedői. Fontos, hogy európai szinten is elítéljük ezeket a cselekedeteket, és ne engedjük, hogy hasonló megismétlődhessen. Magyarország jószomszédként mindig kiállt Ukrajna mellett, elsők között ismerte el a holodomort népirtásnak.

Kinga Gál (NI), *írásban*. – Egy nép halálra éheztetését nem szabad engedni elfelejteni. Ahogy a Gulagra elhurcolt, munkatáborokba, halálba küldött magyarokat sem. A kommunizmus és a diktatúrák áldozatainak, meghurcolt, halálra ítélt férfiak, nők és gyermekek százezreinek, széttépett családok tömkelegének mai napig nem szolgáltattak igazságot. A történelmet jóvátenni, megváltoztatni nem lehet. De az áldozatokról kegyelettel emlékezni, az elhurcoltak méltó emlékét megőrizni kötelességünk. Ez segít hozzá ahhoz, hogy az élet és az igazságosság örökségét hagyjuk a következő generációkra.

Donnerstag, 15. Dezember 2022

4. Die humanitäre Lage in der Ukraine aufgrund der Angriffe Russlands auf kritische Infrastruktur und zivile Bereiche (Aussprache)

Die Präsidentin. – Als nächster Punkt der Tagesordnung folgt die Aussprache über die Erklärung der Kommission zum Thema „Die humanitäre Lage in der Ukraine aufgrund der Angriffe Russlands auf kritische Infrastruktur und zivile Bereiche“ (2022/2998(RSP)).

Stella Kyriakides, *Member of the Commission*. – Madam President, honourable Members, Russia is taking its unjustified war against Ukraine to a new level. As we meet, the Kremlin's forces are committing brutal war crimes across the country. They are bombarding Ukrainian infrastructure. Waves of attacks on the country's electricity grid are being launched every day. Rockets are striking the power stations repeatedly. Putin's war machine has one clear goal: to have Ukrainians freeze and suffer this winter.

All of this is having a tragic impact on the humanitarian situation across the country. According to the UN's latest estimates, nearly 80 million people are in dire need of humanitarian assistance in Ukraine. Millions of Ukrainians are struggling to access healthcare, food and basic social services. In every region of Ukraine, there are areas where people are living without heating, without electricity, without water, some continuously.

For nearly 10 months, the European Union has remained firmly committed to Ukraine and its people. I want to assure this House that this support is unwavering. We are with Ukraine for the long haul. As a humanitarian donor, the EU's funding commitments are strong and significant. Over EUR 485 million of humanitarian aid has already been allocated by the EU to Ukraine this year. With this support, we are providing critical health, protection and shelter assistance needed by the Ukrainian people. More than 13 million Ukrainians have benefited directly from EU humanitarian aid. This is thanks to the tireless efforts of many international humanitarian partners, the International Committee of the Red Cross, UNICEF and the WHO, to name just a few.

But more needs to be done for the people of Ukraine. Across the country, temperatures are now dropping to below freezing. As the EU, we must stand ready to support Ukrainian authorities in providing light and heat to residential buildings, to hospitals and to schools, to the people living there.

This is why we are turning our attention to Ukraine's growing winter needs. Our humanitarian package now includes targeted winter support worth EUR 130 million. With this aid, we are helping partners to distribute emergency shelter and lights, and establish temporary reception centres across the country. In parallel, we are also mobilising more life-saving supplies directly for the Ukrainian people. Through the EU Civil Protection Mechanism, we have coordinated the delivery of almost 77 000 tonnes of assistance since February, and this is a clear display of EU solidarity in action.

With the support of our Member States, we have already offered over 1 000 generators to Ukraine. Last week, we mobilised 40 large generators for our new EU stockpile. This would guarantee power for 30 hospitals in Ukraine. We will soon also have 120 medium to large generators in stock, and we will take further action to expand the power generator capacity of rescEU. Our Union's Civil Protection Mechanism is also supporting the Generators of Hope initiative of Parliament's President Metsola and Eurocities.

Honourable Members, the European Union is determined to scale up its support in view of these unprecedented challenges. At the conference call by Presidents Macron and Zelenskyy in Paris last Tuesday, Commission President von der - Leyen already announced further support in the field of energy.

In the face of these enormous challenges, the European Union, Member States, G7 and other international partners have to work together to increase the impact of our aid. For this reason, the Emergency Response Coordination Centre in the European Commission will be stepping up its coordination activities in order to pool energy assistance from all EU Member States and third countries in a newly established EU energy hub in Poland and channel it into Ukraine. I look forward to hearing your views throughout our debate.

Andrius Kubilius, *on behalf of the PPE Group*. – Madam President, colleagues, Commissioner, of course, the best humanitarian assistance to Ukraine would be more arms deliveries – guns, guns, guns – because this is the only way this war can be ended in the near future. And the war brings humanitarian catastrophe to all the people of Ukraine.

I would like to make just two comments on the humanitarian assistance issue, and what we need to do as the EU. Really, the EU is doing a lot, but I would say we need to stop talking about how much we did and how much we delivered – for example, 1 000 or whatever generators. We need to ask what the needs of Ukraine are – and for generators, 25 000 are needed – and how we are going to cover the difference between what is needed and what is delivered. That's, I think, one of the most important issues for us.

I would also like to see the EU coordinating the efforts of all the citizens of the EU who want to assist Ukraine. And in each village or city of the EU, everybody should know the phone number of the EU coordinator.

Secondly, I would like to suggest the same idea as President Zelenskyy proposed at the very beginning of the war: that each EU Member State should take patronage of an individual region of Ukraine – for example, Estonia for Zhytomyr, Lithuania for Lutsk, and so on – and take care of the humanitarian assistance to that region especially. In order to achieve that, the EU needs to take the role of effective coordination between the EU Member States and the regions of Ukraine. We can do more!

Pedro Marques, *em nome do Grupo S&D*. – Senhora Presidente, Senhora Comissária, Colegas, a guerra de agressão da Rússia contra a Ucrânia ficará para a história como um dos grandes crimes deste século. Pela força das armas, o regime de Putin tentou impor-se à vontade soberana dos ucranianos. Mas a determinação de um povo que quer ser livre prova ser sempre mais forte e, por isso, lhe atribuímos ontem o Prémio Sakharov.

O ataque de Putin contra as infraestruturas básicas da Ucrânia visa punir vingativamente a população pela sua resistência, deixando milhões de pessoas sem energia a enfrentar temperaturas insuportáveis.

Ouvimos testemunhos incríveis daqueles que vieram até cá para receber o Prémio Sakharov de como as famílias estão a unir-se para enfrentar esta situação impossível. A situação é verdadeiramente dramática.

O meu colega Kubilius, que quero cumprimentar pelo facto, recordou aqui várias propostas do governo ucraniano que vão no sentido de reforçar essa ajuda humanitária. Não podemos ficar indiferentes, nem tão pouco paralisados. A União Europeia tem a responsabilidade moral de apoiar a Ucrânia. Por isso, apelo à Comissão e ao Conselho para que continuem a apresentar propostas na linha das que têm vindo a ser defendidas pelo governo ucraniano e por entidades europeias, para que cumpramos coletivamente a nossa responsabilidade. Verão que, da parte do Parlamento Europeu, não encontrarão nada mais do que um apoio esmagador.

Nathalie Loiseau, *au nom du groupe Renew*. – Madame la Présidente, Madame la Commissaire, en Ukraine, Vladimir Poutine conduit la guerre des lâches. Alors qu'il n'a pu prendre ni Kiev ni Kharkiv et qu'il a dû se retirer de Kherson, il cherche à terroriser la population en la privant d'électricité, d'eau et de chauffage. En revanche, il ne connaît rien à l'Ukraine. L'Ukraine, j'en reviens et j'y retournerai encore. Je peux en témoigner: face à l'acharnement russe, le peuple ukrainien ne se décourage pas – au contraire, il enrage. Plus l'Ukraine est frappée, plus elle est soudée; plus Vladimir Poutine essaie de détruire ce pays, plus il consolide la détermination de son peuple à lui résister et à le repousser.

Néanmoins, il m'est facile de prononcer ces mots ici, au chaud, dans le confort d'un pays en paix. Nous ne devons pas nous contenter de nous apitoyer sur l'Ukraine ou d'admirer son peuple. Nous devons tous, et chacun, l'aider à triompher de l'hiver avant de triompher de la guerre. Même les plus pacifistes des Européens ne pourront refuser à l'Ukraine les générateurs qui lui manquent et l'aide dont elle a besoin pour limiter les effets des frappes russes.

Les plus réalistes d'entre nous savent bien que le plus efficace reste encore de fournir à Kiev les systèmes de défense qui repousseront les frappes. Ceux d'entre nous qui veulent vraiment la paix, une paix juste et durable, savent qu'elle passera par une victoire militaire de l'Ukraine et une défaite de la Russie.

L'Ukraine n'a pas besoin de courage – elle en a à revendre. Elle n'a pas besoin de conseils – c'est elle qui se bat et qui endure. Elle a besoin d'amis des mauvais jours, qui l'aident à réparer son pays blessé et à s'assurer que plus jamais à l'avenir, on ne pourra l'agresser.

Erik Marquardt, *im Namen der Verts/ALE-Fraktion.* – Frau Präsidentin, Frau Kommissarin! Das, was wir für die Ukraine tun, das ist ja nicht nichts – das wissen wir, glaube ich, alle. 18 Milliarden Euro, die am Montagfreigegeben wurden, das ist ein hoher Betrag. Aber das, was die Ukrainerinnen und Ukrainer seit dem 24. Februar bezahlen, ist ein so unendlich viel größerer Preis für unsere Freiheit, dass wir, glaube ich, allen Grund dazu haben. zu schauen: Was können wir als Europäische Kommission, was können wir als Europäisches Parlament, aber was können wir auch als Mitgliedstaaten der Europäischen Union tun, damit dieser Kampf für die Freiheit am Ende erfolgreich ist?

Es sind schon 4,8 Millionen Menschen, die in den EU-Staaten Zuflucht gefunden haben. Ich glaube, im letzten Jahr hätte niemand gedacht, dass wir so viele Geflüchtete aufnehmen können. Aber wir müssen auch damit rechnen, dass in diesem Winter natürlich mehr Menschen aus der Ukraine fliehen, und wir müssen uns darauf auch vorbereiten. Ich sehe in keinem der Mitgliedstaaten eine ernsthafte Vorbereitung darauf, dass noch einige Millionen Menschen kommen, und es sind ja nicht nur Menschen aus der Ukraine, die Zuflucht in der Europäischen Union finden müssen.

Ich glaube, wenn wir uns angucken, wie pervers dieser Angriff auch auf die zivile Infrastruktur in der Ukraine stattfindet, dann ist es auf der einen Seite wichtig, dass wir gucken müssen: 1,5 Millionen Menschen in Odessa, aber insgesamt 10 Millionen Menschen, die in der Ukraine momentan keinen Strom haben. Wie können wir mehr Generatoren liefern? Wie können wir mehr Räumwerkzeug liefern? Wie können wir bei der humanitären Hilfe mehr tun?

Aber ich möchte auch sagen, dass all die humanitäre Hilfe am Ende Putin nicht aufhalten wird. Es ist auch ein humanitärer Akt, genügend Waffen in die Ukraine zu schicken, damit die Drohnen abgeschossen werden können, damit die Raketen abgeschossen werden können, damit dafür gesorgt werden kann, dass die Ukraine am Ende wieder eine freie, friedliche Demokratie sein kann. Ich glaube, diese Waffenlieferung ist das, was wir auch jetzt im Winter in den Vordergrund stellen müssen, ohne das andere nicht zu tun.

Veronika Vrecionová, *za skupinu ECR.* – Paní předsedající, právě v těchto dnech miliony lidí na Ukrajině trpí nedostatkem tepla, světla nebo pitné vody. Mezi nimi malé děti, těhotné ženy nebo senioři. V důsledku masivních ruských útoků na ukrajinskou infrastrukturu jsme svědky humanitární krize, jakou Evropa dlouhá léta nepamatuje. Jsem ráda, že Evropská unie přikládá ruku k dílu a dává najevo, že Ukrajinu neopouštíme. Ruské útoky na ukrajinskou energetickou infrastrukturu jsou státním terorismem, kterým se snaží diktátor Putin srazit ukrajinský lid na kolena. Navzdory všem předpokladům před válkou, že Kyjev padne v řádu dní, se Ukrajinci už deset měsíců statečně brání agresorovi, který na jejich území páchá válečné zločiny, vraždí nevinné obyvatele a zemi chce doslova rozmlátit na kousky. Musíme vytrvat a Ukrajině dále pomáhat. Je to v zájmu bezpečnosti celé Evropy.

Younous Omarjee, *au nom du groupe The Left.* – Madam la Présidente, Madame la Commissaire, à celles et ceux qui accompagnent leur condamnation de la Russie de nuances, devant ce qui est le plus grave acte de décivilisation en Europe depuis la Deuxième Guerre mondiale, je dis: «N'avez-vous pas peur, en temps de guerre, de renforcer l'ennemi? N'avez-vous pas perçu que Vladimir Poutine anime depuis des années une internationale d'extrême droite autoritaire, nationaliste, identitaire, religieuse et réactionnaire, devenue une menace pour toute l'Europe? N'avez-vous pas compris qu'à travers l'Ukraine ce sont toutes nos démocraties qui sont attaquées?»

Notre solidarité pour le peuple ukrainien en résistance contre l'envahisseur est totale. Dans cet hiver où les Ukrainiens manquent de tout – de nourriture, d'eau, de vêtements et d'électricité, pour se chauffer, et même pour réchauffer un plat –, notre aide doit être concrète, urgente et renforcée. Elle doit l'être pour les 18 millions d'Ukrainiens qui ont, selon l'ONU, besoin d'une aide humanitaire d'urgence et les 10 millions qui ont besoin d'une aide alimentaire.

Je réitère mon appel aux villes et aux régions d'Europe à rejoindre l'initiative lancée par la Présidente Metsola, Générateurs d'espoir, pour pallier les coupures d'électricité. En ces temps de guerre, où les Ukrainiens sont au front pour repousser l'envahisseur russe, notre seule ligne d'action est l'aide humanitaire au peuple ukrainien et le soutien à l'Ukraine pour défaire l'ennemi. C'est le préalable pour que se dessine la paix future que nous souhaitons tous.

VORSITZ: RAINER WIELAND

Vizepräsident

Radosław Sikorski (PPE). – Panie Przewodniczący! Pani Komisarz! Wysoka Izbo! W mediach społecznościowych opublikowano film, fragment programu publicystycznego rosyjskiej telewizji. Pokazane jest na nim, jak propagandziści Putina naśladują dźwięk spadających na Ukrainę dronów i rakiet, i się z tego śmieją, rechoczą, cieszą się, że cierpią ludzie, którzy według nich są Rosjanami, którzy w ogóle nie są Ukraińcami. Ten ich rechot to jest najlepszy dowód na to, czym dziś jest rosyjski faszyzm, rosyjska potrzeba dominacji.

Przed chwilą rozmawialiśmy o Hołodomorze. Stalin próbował zniszczyć Ukrainę już 90 lat temu, zabił 5 milionów ludzi. Tym razem panie Putin, panu się to nie uda, bo Ukraina walczy i ma solidarność całego cywilizowanego świata. W tej sali kiedyś będą ukraińscy członkowie Parlamentu, a pan, panie Putin, będzie tam, gdzie pan przynależy – na śmietniku historii.

Mónica Silvana González (S&D). – Señor presidente, desde el punto de vista puramente humanitario, nos preocupa y nos ocupa no solamente la crueldad de los ataques contra infraestructuras críticas, sino cómo ser eficaces en la ayuda a las personas, en vista de las nevadas y de las temperaturas de menos de veinte grados bajo cero, mortales si no ayudamos.

Gracias al Equipo Europa, hemos sido capaces de localizar 19 700 millones de euros, que se han materializado en más de 18 000 toneladas de ayuda, a través del Mecanismo de Protección Civil de la Unión Europea; más de 1 600 pacientes trasladados a dieciocho países, a través de los vuelos del Centro de Evacuaciones Médicas; más de 800 generadores de energía, localizados en hospitales y colegios; bombillas, más de 30 millones en ahorro de energía; la creación del nuevo centro sanitario y energético RESCUE en Polonia, que servirá para facilitar el transporte y el almacenamiento de las donaciones de terceros países.

La asistencia a refugios invernales sigue siendo la prioridad absoluta, más después de los hechos que hemos conocido de daños a la infraestructura, y debemos apoyar el trabajo hecho por ECHO. Claro que sí.

Pero también es hora de regular el aporte del sector privado a la ayuda humanitaria, que, junto con otros terceros países, está permitiendo que Ucrania tenga el 75 % de las necesidades cubiertas.

Por ello, desde este Parlamento también llamamos la atención para que no se descuiden otras grandes crisis olvidadas en otros lugares del mundo.

Petras Auštrevičius (Renew). – Mr President, Madam Commissioner, dear colleagues, Russia's military aggression against European Ukraine is based on an attempt to create a critical humanitarian situation by cutting off access to energy, healthcare, food and other essential services and goods. The current Russian leadership is using the genocidal crimes that were mastered long ago by Imperial Russia or the Soviet authorities. Russia's bloody history is repeating itself again.

The determination of the European Union and its Member States to assist and stand with Ukraine and its people in solidarity must continue. Colleagues, as this week the Sakharov Prize 2022 winner, Oleksandra Matviychuk, repeatedly asked for weapons, sanctions and justice. This is an essential condition for Ukraine's survival.

Let us not give up and let us continue helping our Ukrainian brothers and sisters who are fighting for our common values. *Slava Ukraini!*

Jakop G. Dalunde (Verts/ALE). – Herr talman! Kollegor! Det ukrainska folkets mod och kämpaglöd är en urkraft. Men denna glöd sätts på prov när den sanna vinterkylan slår till, när fönster slagits ut av bombernas tryckvågor, när elementen står kalla för att elledningar kapats och kraftverken bombats sönder, när det inte kommer något vatten ur kranen och när man tvingas tillbringa natten i en källare, i en tunnelbanestation eller i ett skyddsrum.

För en månad sedan var jag i Ukraina med några kollegor och fick se denna verklighet som det ukrainska folket utsatts för, och min känsla är att vi måste stötta det ukrainska folket mer. Genom att skydda dem med luftvärn mot missilerna, genom ekonomiskt stöd. Vi måste sluta köpa fossil energi från Ryssland som finansierar kriget. Detta måste ske nu.

Dominik Tarczyński (ECR). – Mr President, Madam Commissioner, it's been 10 months – 10 months of this genocide. And Poland from day one was a leader. Over 7 million people crossed the Polish-Ukrainian border. Can you imagine that? Not even one person, Madam Commissioner, not even one family never found any other different place than a Polish home. We don't have camps for refugees in Poland, because we are so open. But in Europe we still have hypocrites who are making money with Russia on diamonds.

Why is Belgium selling diamonds? Why is Antwerp protesting to get diamonds into the embargo? Why is there no embargo on diamonds? Why do we hear from Mr Macron that we cannot isolate a leader like Putin? Why can we hear from Mr Schulz that after war we have to go back to the normal relations with Putin?

This is hypocrisy. And if this hypocrisy will not stop, Putin will knock on Berlin's door, Paris' door and other doors in Europe. But Poland was first to react, and we are leaders. So be like Poland.

Riho Terras (PPE). – Mr President, dear colleagues, we have met with many friends of Ukraine this week in Strasbourg. They are all very brave people who leave their homeland and fight for their freedom every day. The people of Ukraine are at the forefront of the Western democracy. They are fighting our fight – let's not forget that.

Russia aimed for a short and victorious war 10 months ago when they launched a full-scale attack against Ukraine. They were totally wrong. War against the brave people of Ukraine is not just a walk in the park. Russia, after numerous failures, has chosen the tactics of destroying Ukraine's energy infrastructure. It is a modern day 'scorched earth' tactic because we all depend on energy so much. Russia has destroyed Ukrainian hospitals in cold blood for the start of the ongoing military campaign. We should not be surprised. Remember Grozny. Remember Aleppo.

This House must do its utmost to convince our governments that Ukraine needs more weapons and Ukraine needs more support. We cannot afford to wait until the end of the war to start to rebuild Ukraine. *Slava Ukraini!*

Włodzimierz Cimoszewicz (S&D). – Panie Przewodniczący! W wyniku zbrodniczej agresji Rosji na Ukrainę wiele tysięcy obywateli tego kraju straciło życie lub odniosło rany. Miliony zostały zmuszone do opuszczenia swoich domów, często tracąc dorobek całego życia. W ostatnich tygodniach Rosja prowadzi terrorystyczny atak na infrastrukturę energetyczną i transportową z pełną świadomością, że wraz z początkiem zimy życie i zdrowie milionów Ukraińców zostają zagrożone.

Żaden kraj nie jest przygotowany do szybkiej i skutecznej reakcji na kryzys o takiej skali. Żeby zapobiec tragedii, musimy udzielać Ukrainie jeszcze więcej pomocy niż do tej pory. Chodzi zarówno o wsparcie finansowe, jak i rzeczowe, pomagające tym ludziom przeżyć kilka trudnych najbliższych miesięcy. Ubrania, urządzenia grzewcze, ciepła odzież, trwała żywność, leki, środki sanitarne i opatrunkowe to dobra pierwszej potrzeby.

Musimy wesprzeć ukraińską służbę zdrowia, zajmując się rannymi i chorymi. Trzeba się liczyć z ryzykiem gwałtownego wzrostu zachorowań na różne choroby. Pamiętajmy, że szczególnie poszkodowane są ukraińskie dzieci. Spróbujmy wyobrazić sobie traumę, jaką przeżywają. Byłoby niezwykle dobrze, gdyby państwa członkowskie Unii uzgodniły pilnie program przyjmowania milionów młodych Ukraińców choćby na kilkutygodniowy pobyt pozwalający im zapomnieć o nieustannym zagrożeniu bombardowaniem. Dzisiaj wszyscy zdajemy egzamin z człowieczeństwa i zdolności do przeciwstawiania się zbrodniczej napaści.

Zło nie może zwyciężyć.

Katalin Cseh (Renew). – Mr President, dear colleagues, on the EU's doorstep over 17 000 innocent civilians have died in Vladimir Putin's barbaric war. Ukraine is bracing for a winter without shelter, without power, without food. Russian armed forces are deliberately shelling schools and hospitals. The devastation and suffering is unimaginable.

And how do Europe's illiberal populists respond to that? They veto humanitarian aid to Ukraine because they want to extort money from the EU. First, Viktor Orbán blocked the aid. He dropped his veto on Monday as others in the Council promised him some money. And then today the news broke that the Polish Government wants to extort the EU too. They hold up the aid package, and let's be honest, they also want money in exchange.

There are absolutely no words left to describe how shameful it all is. But I really hope that Council finally learned the lesson. If you give in to the extortionists, they will always come back for more.

Damian Boeselager (Verts/ALE). – Mr President, dear Commissioner, dear colleagues, yesterday we celebrated the brave people of Ukraine and at the same time there were drone attacks in the middle of Kyiv, in the city centre. I was myself in Kyiv this summer and I fell in love with the city and with the people who are trying to live a regular life despite the constant attacks from the air.

But behind their remarkable resilience, there's a huge and immense tragedy, with attacks on households, families and children at any given point in time. So we must do three things. The first one is we need to look at our sanctions and see if they are economically biting Putin at this very moment and instantly. Second, we need to invest not only with public sector but also with private sector money in the areas of Ukraine that are currently safe with the help of war insurances. And thirdly, we need to make sure that our weapons deliveries are actually working from all our countries, including Germany, with the tanks that are needed.

I think we have a chance now with a sanctions package to also sanction political parties and all their party members to make sure Russians have a choice: leave the parties that are pro-war or face sanctions.

Tonino Picula (S&D). – Mr President, together with several colleagues, I visited Kyiv two weeks ago. Horrific numbers we hear about victims, destroyed objects and missiles targeted at civilian targets become truly real once you see it first-hand.

Russia did not succeed with its military plans, so it is now targeting critical and civilian infrastructure. Over 65 000 destroyed objects and 17 000 airstrikes Ukraine endured since 24 February. Six million people are without electricity. At a certain moment, Kyiv did not have electricity, water, heating or internet. The situation two weeks ago was alarming and now with even lower temperatures, it's becoming critical.

Ukrainians are fighting bravely and we need to do everything we can to help them win this fight with more humanitarian, financial and military assistance. A significant concrete step would be EUR 18 billion in macro-financial assistance. We committed and approved it. Now we need to deliver it urgently.

Karin Karlsbro (Renew). – Herr talman! Fru kommissionär! Det lider mot jul. Vi sjunger om tusen juleljus och fred på jorden. Men i krigets Ukraina är det mörkt. Utanför Sofiakatedralen i Kiev ska man som vanligt resa en julgran, för, som borgmästaren sa, Putin ska inte få stjäla julen. Men granen kommer inte att ha några ljus i år, för elförsörjningen befinner sig på bristningsgränsen.

Rysslands angrepp på Ukraina har som mål att maximera lidandet och dödandet. Ukraina slåss inte bara för sin egen existens utan för hela Europa. Det är vår skyldighet att ge Ukraina de vapen, det skydd och det stöd de behöver. Det är mörkt nu, men vi ska kämpa tillsammans för ljusare tider, när ukrainarna inte behöver fira jul i mörka skyddsrum, när de som begått krigsbrott döms, när Ukrainas befolkning fått sitt land, sin frihet och sin fred tillbaka.

Sunčana Glavak (PPE). – Poštovani predsjedavajući, poštovana povjerenice, kolegice i kolege, ušli smo u deseti mjesec ilegalne ruske agresije na prijateljsku i suverenu Ukrajinu.

Unatoč uspješnoj protuofenzivi ukrajinskih trupa, agresor je i dalje vrlo opasan te konstantno prilagođava svoje djelovanje. Njihova najnovija taktika usmjerena je na raketne napade na ključnu infrastrukturu u Ukrajini, s posebnim naglaskom na njihovu energetsku mrežu. Uz to, mete su i škole, bolnice, prometnice te druga kritična infrastruktura. Na ovaj način ruska vojska pokušava potkopati industrijsku proizvodnju, poremetiti logističke linije, utjecati na moral te onemogućiti civilima pristup izvorima tople vode, struje. U svijetu nadolazeće zime ovakvo djelovanje stvara preduvjete za neviđenu humanitarnu krizu, što izaziva veliku zabrinutost. Pred nama su teška vremena te u njima Europski parlament mora nastaviti pružati nedvosmislenu i beskompromisnu potporu herojskom ukrajinskom narodu, jer oni se ne bore samo za svoju zemlju, već i za vrijednosti koje mi dijelimo.

Kolegice i kolege, narušen je europski mir. Zlo rata, nažalost, moja zemlja Hrvatska jako dobro poznaje. Grobnice, strahote, uništavanje čitavih gradova, nasilje nad ženama, brojna uništena djetinjstva. Zato nemamo moralnu i ljudsku dvojbu. U duhu kršćanske solidarnosti naša je obveza i odgovornost pružiti im svu moguću pomoć u tim naporima. Slava Ukrajini.

Sven Mikser (S&D). – Mr President, dear colleagues, it has become absolutely clear that Russia can never win a victory over Ukraine on the battlefield. And they know that. And that's why they are increasingly resorting to terrorising the Ukrainian civilian population on a huge scale.

Russia's intent is clearly genocidal. The statements by Russian leaders, denying the existence of Ukrainians as a nation and Ukraine as a separate country, clearly testify to that. While their intent is genocidal, the tactics they have chosen is terrorism.

At this critical moment, we have to do more than we have done so far. We have to help Ukrainians get through this harsh Ukrainian winter by giving them equipment to keep the critical utilities operating as well as giving them financial support so as to keep the budget afloat.

But we also have to dramatically step up the military aid that is giving Ukraine the weapons on the scale and of the kind that help them achieve a decisive victory on the battlefield. That's the best way to help save Ukrainian lives and achieve a decisive victory over the aggressor. *Slava Ukraini!*

Dita Charanzová (Renew). – Mr President, the main target of Putin's torture are civilians, the innocent and the most vulnerable. Recently, torture chambers for children were found in a Kherson region. There have been over 700 attacks on health facilities since the war began, and a Russian army has destroyed most of the energy system of Ukraine. People have to get by with a maximum of two hours of electricity a day, living in cold houses and temperatures below zero.

So what are these solutions? We must organise and lead a major public and private international humanitarian effort to help Ukrainian people make it through the winter. We must prevent blackouts, send portable generators. But above all, we must stop the flow of deadly weapons to Russia.

Michaela Šojdrová (PPE). – Pane předsedající, chci i vám všem poděkovat za to, že zde zní jednotný hlas na podporu Ukrajiny proti velké ruské přesile. Všichni sledujeme v přímém přenosu plánované systematické ničení infrastruktury s cílem pokořit ukrajinský národ a já jsem přesvědčena, že jde o genocidu, protože dokonce se neštítí unášet děti, převychovávat děti, adoptovat násilně tyto děti do ruských rodin. Evropský parlament odhlasoval včera velkou většinou podporu osmnácti miliard eur pro Ukrajinu. Je to hodně, ale stále to ještě není dost. Ukrajinský prezident oceňuje a děkuje za tuto pomoc a zároveň prosí a žádá o další, včetně zbraní, včetně humanitární pomoci, ale žádá nás také o vznik tribunálu pro zločiny ruské agrese vůči Ukrajině. Žádá nás o to také držitelka Nobelovy ceny Oleksandra Matvijčuková. Je třeba nastolit spravedlnost a odsoudit ty, kteří toto násilí organizují.

A dovolte mi ještě na závěr moji osobní výzvu a prosbu. Máme zde místopředsedy Evropského parlamentu. Prosím, aby vedení Parlamentu zvážilo, abychom ušetřili prostředky za to, když vytápíme dva velké parlamenty ve Štrasburku i v Bruselu. Myslím, že po dobu zimních měsíců do doby května bychom mohli ušetřit miliony eur za to, kdybychom nemuseli přejíždět.

Heléne Fritzon (S&D). – Herr talman! Kommissionär! Rysslands fruktansvärda krig mot Ukraina pågår här och nu. Infrastruktur attackeras. Hus, skolor, lekplatser bombas. Människors liv slås i spillror. Nu väntar en vinter, en julhelg, men EU får inte ta paus. Vi måste fortsätta vårt fulla stöd till Ukraina i ord och handling.

I våras tog vi socialdemokrater initiativ till en resolution som krävde konkreta åtgärder för att skydda barn och ungdomar som drabbas av kriget. Och det är lika angeläget nu. Vi måste behålla ett barnrättsperspektiv i de åtgärder som vi sänder till Ukraina. Det handlar om humanitärt stöd, återuppbyggnad av viktig infrastruktur och solidaritet med det ukrainska folket. Vi måste fortsätta att ge vårt fulla stöd, för den ukrainska befolkningens skull, för demokrati och frihet i Europa och världen.

Deirdre Clune (PPE). – Mr President, since 10 October, Russia has been targeting air and missile attacks on critical infrastructure in Ukraine on a nearly weekly basis. These attacks have caused significant damage to Ukraine's power grid and energy stations, resulting in countrywide blackouts, telephone and Internet outages, and loss of water supplies. Ukrainians are facing those attacks in sub-zero temperatures, with families freezing in their homes. So increased humanitarian aid is needed. And, of course, many of those families are also displaced.

Such attacks have also severely affected healthcare in Ukraine. And as of last week, the World Health Organization had documented 715 attacks on healthcare facilities since the beginning of this war. Doctors and medics are unable to treat patients, again worsening the humanitarian situation. Indeed, attacks on transport and energy infrastructure have restricted patients and mobility, and their access to these vital healthcare services.

So they need support. We need more humanitarian aid to Ukraine, to those brave people of Ukraine, who I am sure sometimes cannot be brave all the time in these difficult, horrendous situations that have been caused by Russia's horrendous attack on their country, their critical infrastructure in civilian areas. And that's evidence that Mr Putin is unwilling to engage in meaningful diplomacy. We must do everything we can to support Ukraine now and into the future.

Raphaël Glucksmann (S&D). – Monsieur le Président, chers collègues, vous avez tous vu ces images insupportables d'un terroriste revendiquant les actes de terreur de son armée avec un verre de champagne à la main. Vladimir Poutine est un terroriste, et il pousse le cynisme du style de la communication de Daech à un degré inégalé. Incapable de défaire militairement la résistance héroïque du peuple ukrainien, il a décidé de détruire les infrastructures civiles du pays, de terroriser sa population et de la faire geler.

Face à cela, nous devons cesser nos tergiversations. Nous savions depuis le début que les Ukrainiens auraient besoin de systèmes de défense antiaériens performants. Nous savions depuis le début que nous finirions par donner ces systèmes de défense. Alors, ne perdons plus de temps. Le temps que nous perdons ici se paie en vies humaines en Ukraine. Notre objectif doit être clair: défaire la machine terroriste russe et donner à l'Ukraine la victoire qu'elle mérite, qui est aussi la victoire de l'Europe. *Slava Ukraïni, Slava Evropi!*

Seán Kelly (PPE). – *A Uachtaráin*, the current humanitarian situation in Ukraine is sobering. And as the winter sets in, the Ukrainian people are preparing for the worst. The health system is facing its darkest days in the war so far. Russia has been targeting the country's infrastructure, leaving millions without electricity, heating or water. The attacks are relentless and temperatures are freezing. Since the beginning of the war Russia has indiscriminately attacked hospitals. Already, more than 1 100 healthcare facilities have been damaged and 144 completely destroyed. This will have an impact on the health of Ukrainians for years to come.

There is No Christmas or New Year truce planned for Ukraine. This will be an extremely tough winter. We must continue to support Ukraine with generators and heating systems. In this regard, I would like to compliment my colleague Andrzej Halicki for his initiative in supplying generators to Ukraine, and maybe as a collective of MEPs, we could fund more generators for Ukraine in the New Year. That would be wonderful.

Infrastructure, rehabilitation of schools and hospitals will be vital. Our collective support for Ukraine is crucial to ensure its recovery and reconstruction. *Slava Ukraini!*

Miapetra Kumpula-Natri (S&D). – Mr President, Ukraine saw its first snow this mid-November, just a couple of days after the new wave of missile attacks targeting energy infrastructure had left approximately 10 million people, our friends, without electricity and a warm place. As we speak, organisations are providing generators in coordination with the Ukraine authorities to ensure electricity supply to critical facilities, hospitals, schools and then heating points for people to get together. However, this is not enough and we need to do more to win the war and to protect Ukraine, their own land and their homes.

Winter conditions in Ukraine, where the temperature can drop below 20 degrees, brings a new dimension to the humanitarian crisis in the country. As energy is weaponised, we have to stay firm. It is seen in our countries, too, with the unbearable prices homes sometimes need to pay. We need a resistance together with the Ukrainians. We need to act on every level. And I don't bear any populistic talks in this crisis. *Slava Ukraini!*

Juozas Olekas (S&D). – Mr President, Commissioner, dear colleagues, unfortunately, we see again that currently Russia is ruled by criminal regime, ready to use any form of violence against any target in order to reach its imperialistic goals. It is a crime against humanity to target civilian objects and to try to freeze millions Ukrainians by that. These criminal genocide attacks and all those who ordered it and implemented these orders, must be prosecuted by newly established international special tribunal.

What can we do to help to solve this dire situation for millions of Ukrainians? Yes, we must send thousands of heaters and generators. We must send equipment to fix damaged networks. We must be ready for the possible new wave of the war refugees from Ukraine, who decide to run from the cold.

But the most important thing is to make sure that such damage does not happen again. And this is possible only by sending the most modern air defence system to Ukraine and by continuous military equipment to the Ukrainian army. *Slava Ukraini!*

Spontane Wortmeldungen

Der Präsident. – Wir kommen jetzt zu den spontanen Wortmeldungen, und ich darf vielleicht kurz sagen, dass es eine ständige Praxis ist, wenn hier im Haus jemand seine Redezeit versäumt, dass ich ihn dann nicht hinten anschließe, sondern im Verfahren der spontanen Wortmeldungen drannehme.

Heute haben wir da mehrere Fälle. Ich nehme an, das ist dieses Mal der Wetterlage geschuldet. Ansonsten bin ich nichtdestotrotz der Meinung, dass die Rednerliste ein unverbindlicher Vorschlag ist, wann man sich hier vielleicht einfinden könnte. Deshalb haben wir einige Redner ins Verfahren der spontanen Wortmeldungen genommen.

Es beginnt Frau Kollegin von Cramon-Taubadel, für die meine Vorbemerkung natürlich nicht gilt.

Viola von Cramon-Taubadel (Verts/ALE). – Herr Präsident! Wir haben hier heute darüber gesprochen: Die Brutalität des russischen Regimes ist schier unvorstellbar. Was Russland bisher nicht mit der militärischen Macht geschafft hat, hat es zuerst mit Hunger versucht, dann haben sie es mit Energie versucht, jetzt versuchen sie es mit Erfrieren. Sie wollen die Menschen, die Zivilistinnen und Zivilisten, erfrieren lassen.

Aber wer mit den Ukrainerinnen und Ukrainern im Moment spricht, der hört eben auch eines: Sie werden nicht nachgeben, sie werden diesen Winter überleben, Sie werden alles dafür tun, ihre Heimat und ihre Region, ihre Städte zu verteidigen. Dafür haben sie nicht nur unsere Bewunderung und unser Verständnis verdient, sondern eben auch unsere echte, harte Unterstützung.

Wir tun bereits sehr viel hier aus der Europäischen Union und auch aus den Mitgliedstaaten heraus. Aber wir müssen genau diese Unterstützung, diese Hilfe, diesen Beistand noch erhöhen. Wir brauchen mehr Flugabwehr, die tatsächlich die Bomben vom Himmel holt. Wir brauchen die Panzer, um die Regionen zu befreien. Wir brauchen auch noch mehr Generatoren. Und am Ende, wenn das nicht reicht, müssen wir unsere Türen öffnen und müssen tatsächlich noch mehr Ukrainerinnen und Ukrainer in unseren Ländern aufnehmen.

Gunnar Beck (ID). – Herr Präsident! Die russische Armee hat kritische zivile Infrastruktur in der Ukraine zerstört, das heißt Kraftwerke, Energie- und Transportinfrastruktur. Das Ergebnis: Erhebliche Schäden an über 40 % der Energieanlagen in der Ukraine und Stromausfälle, teils geplant, um Reparaturen zu erleichtern und Überlastung des verbleibenden Stromnetzes zu vermeiden.

Nun, gezielte Angriffe auf Energieversorgung und kritische Infrastruktur gibt es auch in der EU. Die Bundesregierung hat gesetzlich die Abschaltung aller Atomkraftwerke beschlossen und so die Energieversorgung ihrer Bürger und Industrie gefährdet und exorbitant verteuert.

Jetzt wird vor Winterausfällen im Stromnetz gewarnt. In Frankreich kommt es bereits zu geplanten Stromausfällen. Die Ereignisse in der Ukraine sind schrecklich, aber überflüssig ist, dass auch bei uns die Leute frieren oder ihre Rechnungen nicht mehr bezahlen können.

Fabio Massimo Castaldo (NI). – Mr President, dear Commissioner, horrible war crimes have been committed daily in the past ten months. We have heard accounts of deliberate and indiscriminate attacks against civilians, torture, illicit use of weapons and the use of illicit weapons. And now also massive attacks against critical civilian infrastructures, preventing even hospitals from working properly and putting civilians, even babies and kids under the threat of frost and cold.

A strong and unequivocal international legal response to the aggression against Ukraine, to this predatory and imperialist war unleashed by Russia, permitting no place for impunity for serious violations, and emphasising the legal responsibility of the perpetrators is therefore of utmost importance.

And I use the occasion to call once more on the Union to update and integrate the decision of 2011 on ICC with a strong position on the crime of aggression, as called by our Resolution 2014, and to promote the reform of the Rome Statute aimed at aligning the ICC jurisdiction on the crime of aggression with that already in place of genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes.

Ангел Джамбазки (ECR). – Г-н Председател, благодаря за това, че ми давате думата толкова бързо. Руската агресия срещу Украйна премина в нова фаза. Нещо познато от историята на руските и на съветските окупационни и автократични режими. Атаки срещу цивилната инфраструктура, които целят да принудят украинското правителство да прекрати своята съпротива. Но целта на тази атака и разрушаването на инфраструктурата ще бъде поразяването и страданието на милиони хора и форсиране на допълнителна миграционна вълна.

Това разбира се, е недопустимо, неприемливо и на него трябва да бъде отговорено с все по-сериозен и ясен отговор от страна на ЕС. Трябва да бъдат разширени и санкциите, и недопускането на закупуване на полезни и всякакви други изкопаеми от Русия, така че да не бъде финансирана тази поредна руска агресия срещу украинския народ и срещу цивилните граждани.

(Ende der spontanen Wortmeldungen)

Stella Kyriakides, *Member of the Commission*. – Mr President, honourable Members, the European Union is determined to support Ukraine and its people. This is clear following our exchange today. In order to provide effective support, we need to first tackle rising winter needs across the country.

The Commission is already taking concrete steps to strengthen its assistance to Ukraine this winter. We are investing in additional EU generated stockpiles as part of our rescEU reserve. As I speak, the Commission is finalising a grant agreement with Poland for the procurement of new generators.

As announced by President von der Leyen in Paris on Tuesday, we have a new energy hub available in Poland. This can be a central hub for international donations and can channel aid from third countries all the way to Ukraine. At the same time, our Emergency Response Coordination Centre continues to coordinate in-kind from 35 European countries. The European Commission counts on the European Parliament to support these efforts.

Honourable Members, thank you for hosting this debate.

Der Präsident. – Die Aussprache ist geschlossen.

Donnerstag, 15. Dezember 2022

(Die Sitzung wird um 11.18 Uhr unterbrochen)

PŘEDSEDNICTVÍ: DITA CHARANZOVÁ

místopředsedkyně

5. Wiederaufnahme der Sitzung

(The sitting resumed at 12.02)

Jan Olbrycht, *on behalf of the PPE Group*. – Madam President, dear colleagues, the EPP Group requests a point of order on the basis of Rule 200(4) of the EP Rules of Procedure on the adjournment of a vote. In light of the ongoing criminal investigations into a corrupt network of individual Members, former Members and assistants in the European Parliament, the EPP Group is extremely concerned about the integrity of the foreign policy positions of the European Parliament as expressed in the urgency resolutions.

We simply cannot continue with business as usual before we can establish with certainty that the integrity of the procedure and the network does not remain compromised by third countries like Qatar. We should stop all work on urgency resolutions. We must take bold and radical decisions to stop the damage of this corrupt network from spreading further into our parliamentary work.

This is why, Madam President, on behalf of the EPP Group, I request that all the three votes of urgency resolutions are adjourned.

Reinhard Bütikofer (Verts/ALE). – Madam President, colleagues, the EPP published a press release yesterday that has now been read to the Parliament twice, once by Ms Zovko last night, and just now. In this statement, and I quote, they question 'the integrity of the foreign policy positions of the EP, as expressed in the urgency resolutions'. This casts a very dark shadow of suspicion and insinuation over the complete human rights work of this Parliament. And unfortunately they do so without the slightest indication that there is any reason to do it. They just take the corruption scandal that we have to fight against as an excuse for trying to kill the urgencies that they wanted to kill anyway.

Rule 144(2) of our Rules of Procedure states, and I quote, '[t]he Conference of Presidents shall draw up a list of subjects to be included in the final draft agenda for the next debate on cases of breaches of human rights, democracy and the rule of law on the basis of the request referred to in paragraph 1 and in accordance with the provisions of Annex IV. The total number of subjects included in the agenda shall not exceed three, including sub-chapters.'

On this basis, I request that the President ensures that the work of this Parliament on human rights that is founded in this paragraph of Rule 144 shall not be obstructed by the EPP, who call for a stop of all the work.

(Parliament rejected the PPE Group's request)

Jan Olbrycht, *on behalf of the PPE Group*. – Madam President, we take note that the Chamber has rejected our request. For this reason, allow me to explain the position of the EPP Group. The EPP Group has tried hard to persuade other groups to include in this week's resolution on corruption a need to define the scope of urgency resolutions better in order to ensure proper scrutiny of a third-party influence. But incredibly, this was not accepted. A majority composed of the left-wing groups in this House did not even accept a single reference to the urgent need for transparency and financing of NGOs, when we all know that the NGOs were involved with the scandal.

President. – I'm sorry, I don't want to open the debate on this issue.

Jan Olbrycht, *on behalf of the PPE Group*. – The last sentence is very important. For this reason, the EPP Group has decided that until the integrity of this procedure is restored, it will not take part in any preparation, any negotiation, any co-signing and any debate, and will not take part in the plenary votes on the urgency resolutions.

President. – We take note.

6. Abstimmungsstunde

President. – The next item is the vote.

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

6.1. Niederschlagung der friedlichen Proteste in der gesamten Volksrepublik China durch die chinesische Regierung (RC-B9-0563/2022, B9-0563/2022, B9-0569/2022, B9-0571/2022, B9-0572/2022, B9-0573/2022) (Abstimmung)

6.2. Niederschlagung friedlicher Demonstrationen im Tschad durch die Militärjunta (B9-0574/2022, RC-B9-0575/2022, B9-0575/2022, B9-0576/2022, B9-0577/2022, B9-0578/2022, B9-0579/2022) (Abstimmung)

6.3. Der Fall des Menschenrechtsverteidigers Abdulhadi al-Chawadscha in Bahrain (RC-B9-0558/2022, B9-0558/2022, B9-0562/2022, B9-0565/2022, B9-0567/2022, B9-0568/2022, B9-0570/2022) (Abstimmung)

6.4. Korruptionsverdacht gegen Katar und die umfassendere Notwendigkeit von Transparenz und Rechenschaftspflicht in den Organen der EU (B9-0580/2022, RC-B9-0581/2022, B9-0581/2022, B9-0582/2022, B9-0583/2022, B9-0584/2022, B9-0585/2022, B9-0587/2022) (Abstimmung)

— *After the vote on Amendment 23:*

Marco Zanni (ID). – Signora Presidente, onorevoli colleghi, in apertura dei lavori lunedì, in quest'Aula, risuonava una parola pronunciata da tutti, unità, per meglio reagire a uno scandalo senza precedenti. Ebbene, mi spiace constatare che qualcuno sia ancora vittima della propria miope arroganza politica.

Per questo motivo propongo, a nome del gruppo ID, un emendamento orale per cui il paragrafo 3 dovrebbe diventare come il seguente: «3. sottolinea che la gravità e l'ampiezza delle indagini in corso impongono al Parlamento e alle istituzioni dell'UE di reagire con unità inequivocabile e con ferma determinazione; riafferma che la propria idea di unità inequivocabile non include tutti i gruppi politici, ovvero i rappresentanti di milioni di cittadini europei;».

Concludo, Presidente, dicendo che quest'Aula è solo un'altra prova dell'ipocrisia e della meschinità di alcuni in questo Parlamento, che si sentono di diritto moralmente superiori anche ora che i recenti gravi fatti li hanno clamorosamente smentiti.

(Parliament did not agree to put the oral amendment to the vote)

Donnerstag, 15. Dezember 2022

6.5. 90 Jahre nach dem Holodomor: Anerkennung der Massentötung durch Hunger als Völkermord (RC-B9-0559/2022, B9-0559/2022, B9-0560/2022, B9-0561/2022, B9-0564/2022, B9-0566/2022) (Abstimmung)

6.6. Verstärkung des Mehrjährigen Finanzrahmens 2021-2027 (A9-0281/2022 - Jan Olbrycht, Margarida Marques) (Abstimmung)

6.7. Beratungen des Petitionsausschusses im Jahr 2021 (A9-0271/2022 - Loránt Vincze) (Abstimmung)

President. – That concludes the vote.

(The sitting was suspended at 12.30)

7. Wiederaufnahme der Sitzung

(The sitting resumed at 15.01)

8. Genehmigung des Protokolls der vorangegangenen Sitzung

President. – The minutes of yesterday's sitting and the texts adopted are available. Are there any comments? As this is not the case, the minutes are approved.

9. Große Anfragen (Aussprache)

President. – The next item is the debate on the major interpellation to the Commission by Nicolaus Fest, Bernhard Zimniok, Gunnar Beck, Markus Buchheit and Gerolf Annemans, on behalf of the ID Group, on attacks on critical energy infrastructure (G-001001/2022).

Gunnar Beck, *Verfasser.* – Frau Präsidentin! Mehr als zwei Monate nach dem Sabotageanschlag gegen die Nord-Stream-Pipelines werden die Urheber immer noch verschleiert. Deutsche Medien behaupten, es sei Russland. Doch wieso sollte Russland das Anlagevermögen seines bedeutendsten Energieunternehmens beschädigen und sich der Profite aus dem verbleibenden europäischen Energiegeschäft berauben?

War es Polen, das stets gegen Nord Stream war, oder die Ukrainer, weil sie die Pipeline als russische militärische Infrastruktur ansehen? Oder waren es die USA, wie der US-nahe polnische EU-Politiker Sikorski kurz nach den Anschlägen bekannt gab, weil sie ihr Flüssiggas verkaufen wollen? Antworten bleiben bislang aus.

Dabei schaden solche Verdächtigungen den gutnachbarlichen Beziehungen. Deshalb brauchen wir Aufklärung, brutalstmögliche Aufklärung, wie es einmal beim Korruptionsskandal in der CDU hieß. Nur hier sollten Taten Worten folgen.

Aufklären sollte vor allem die Kommission. Sie hat die Regierungsgewalt über Nord Stream an sich gerissen, und nun hat sie das wertvolle Stück verloren. Das ist so, als wenn man im Theater zwangsweise seinen Mantel abgeben muss und nach einer schlechten Aufführung gesagt bekommt, das teure Stück sei nun leider unauffindbar, und niemand sei schuld.

Deutschland hat wohl untersucht, aber laienhaft und ohne Taucher. Schweden und Dänemark liegen Erkenntnisse vor, diese wollen sie aber nicht mitteilen. Hier hätten wir doch einmal einen typischen Fall für europäische Zusammenarbeit. Die EU sollte die Erkenntnisse bündeln und offenlegen.

Reden wir Klartext: Russland hat mit der Sabotage höchstwahrscheinlich nichts zu tun, denn es fehlen Indizien und ein Motiv. Neben Russland ist Deutschland der Hauptgeschädigte, aber die Bundesregierung hat Angst vor den wahren Urhebern, und die Kommission hüllt sich in Intransparenz. Aber vielleicht überraschen Sie uns ja und haben nun hier im Plenum ein paar konkrete Antworten für uns.

Stella Kyriakides, *Member of the Commission*. – Madam President, honourable Members, our society relies heavily on both physical and digital critical infrastructure. The interruption of essential services, whether through direct physical attack or cyberattack, can have serious consequences for both citizens and economies. Given the current geopolitical and security situation in Europe, we need to ensure that our critical infrastructure, be it pipelines, transport or undersea cables, is secure and resilient.

Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine has intensified a broad spectrum of threats, often combined in hybrid attacks. Some of these target critical infrastructure in Europe. We take very seriously the sabotage of the Nord Stream gas pipelines. The Commission is closely and continuously monitoring its consequences. Member States have the primary responsibility for security of infrastructure. The investigation of damage, causes and perpetrators of these attacks is ongoing under the responsibility of the national authorities. We are in close contact with them since the beginning.

The Parliament called on us to make the protection of critical infrastructure a priority. Soon after the attacks, President von der Leyen presented in this Chamber a five-point plan on critical infrastructure. On 18 October, the Commission adopted a proposal for a recommendation. Not even two months later we already have tangible results.

Last week, the Council recommendation on a Union-wide coordinated approach to strengthen the resilience of critical infrastructure was adopted. It will give better support to Member States in enhancing the cybersecurity and the physical resilience of critical infrastructure. The recommendation focuses on the energy sector and also covers digital infrastructure, transport, transport and space. We also invite Member States to start to implement the two recently adopted directives on the resilience of the critical entities and on measures for a high common level of cybersecurity across the Union already now. We cannot afford to waste time.

As a priority, we have asked Member States to carry out stress tests on critical infrastructure. The Commission has agreed with Member States on common criteria for conducting stress tests, starting with the energy sector as a priority. A blueprint on critical infrastructure incidents and crises will set out the cooperation structure in case of an incident so that the collaboration between the Member States and the EU institutions, bodies and agencies is ensured.

Andreas Schwab, *im Namen der PPE-Fraktion*. – Frau Präsidentin, Frau Kommissarin, liebe Kolleginnen und Kollegen! Kritische Infrastrukturen sind in Europa heute zunehmend nur noch grenzüberschreitend denkbar und nutzbar. Deswegen ist es gut, dass wir soeben die Ausführungen der Europäischen Kommission dazu gehört haben, wie wir kritische Infrastrukturen – wozu nicht nur Energieübertragungsnetzwerke gehören – gemeinsam besser schützen können und deswegen natürlich auch die Frage stellen müssen, wenn Schäden entstanden sind, wer diese Schäden verursacht hat, und zum Zweiten, wie wir solche Schäden in der Zukunft vermeiden können.

Insofern trägt die Anfrage heute eigentlich der Tatsache Rechnung, dass wir natürlich alle besorgt sind, dass wir die Infrastrukturen, die zwischen unseren Ländern liegen, gemeinsam zu verantworten haben und dass sie vor allem dann, wenn sie zwischen den Ländern in mehr Tiefen liegen, einen besonderen Schutz brauchen. Deswegen glaube ich, dass es richtig ist, dass die Mitgliedstaaten und die Anliegerstaaten, die ja alle in der NATO sind, sich gemeinsam darauf verständigt haben, hier ein höheres Schutzniveau sicherzustellen.

Ich glaube allerdings – anders, als der einführende Kollege gesagt hat: Die Europäische Union hat sich die Macht nicht an sich gerissen, sondern es ist schlicht und ergreifend so, dass es für die innere Sicherheit in den Mitgliedstaaten die Zuständigkeiten gibt, die bei den Mitgliedstaaten selber verblieben sind. Das gilt auch für militärische und sicherheitstechnische Fragen, auch was die Geheimdienste angeht. Es ist aber auf der anderen Seite auch richtig, dass es eine allgemeine, im Interesse der Bürger und des Binnenmarktes liegende Verantwortung für die Übertragung in kritischen Infrastrukturen gibt, und hier geht es jetzt im Einzelfall eben um Gas. Man könnte aber auch andere Übertragungswege wie beispielsweise Öl- oder Telekommunikationsübertragungswege hinzunehmen.

Insofern gibt es sicherlich eine Interaktion zwischen kritischer Infrastruktur, die von den Mitgliedstaaten einerseits kontrolliert und geschützt werden muss und, wenn es notwendig ist, eben auch gemeinsam. Darauf haben Sie zu Recht hingewiesen, da sind wir auf einem guten Weg. Das muss aber noch besser werden. Zum Zweiten gibt es natürlich auch einen Nutzungseffekt für die Unternehmen, die im Binnenmarkt agieren. Daraus leitet sich der Auftrag der Kommission ab, sicherzustellen, dass diese Dienstleistungen grenzüberschreitend funktionieren können.

Wir als EVP-Fraktion haben vor einigen Wochen darauf hingewiesen, dass wir einen einheitlichen Energiebinnenmarkt in Europa brauchen, der auch einer vollen Harmonisierung unterliegt, wenn wir gerade an den Grenzen feststellen, dass die Zusammenarbeit und die Erweiterung der Interkonnektoren noch nicht so schnell und so gut geht, wie wir uns das wünschen würden, um am Ende ganz Europa energietechnisch resilient zu machen, also für den Notfall gerüstet.

Etwas Ähnliches, Frau Kommissarin, gilt natürlich auch für die Telekommunikationsübertragungsnetze, denn auch hier – wir haben es am Anfang in der Ukraine ja gesehen – sind wir besonders dann stark, wenn wir sehr viele Verknüpfungen mit den Nachbarstaaten haben, weil wir damit mögliche Ausfälle einzelner lokaler Art viel besser kompensieren können.

Herzlichen Dank für Ihre Ausführungen, Frau Kommissarin.

Łukasz Kohut, *w imieniu grupy S&D*. – Pani Przewodnicząca! Pani Komisarz! Putin od lat atakuje energetycznie Unię Europejską. Zakręca kurki z gazem. Szantażuje nas dostawami energii. Dlatego nigdy więcej business as usual z Rosją.

Czarny sen dla Kremla to Europa niezależna energetycznie, to Europa oparta na odnawialnych źródłach energii, Europa samowystarczalna, która nie potrzebuje ani jednego metra sześciennego gazu i ani jednej tony węgla z importu.

Komisja Europejska i samorząd śląski udowodniły, że ten cel jest wkrótce możliwy do zrealizowania. Dogadali się wbrew pisowskiej dywersji. Są unijne programy na transformację energetyczną: 5 mld euro. Ale poza tym musimy utworzyć wspólny fundusz energetyczny bezpośrednio dla mieszkańców Europy, tak aby nie powtarzać błędów z KPO i z funduszu sprawiedliwej transformacji, które są zależne od niepraworządnych rządów.

Żyjemy w XXI wieku. Mieszkańcy Europy mają prawo do ogrzewania domów bez obaw o rachunki i dostępność surowców. Mają prawo do czystego powietrza. Jako Unia osiągniemy ten cel wbrew Putinowi i wbrew autokratom.

Joachim Kuhs, *im Namen der ID-Fraktion*. – Frau Präsidentin, Frau Kommissarin, werte Kollegen! Die Botschaft hör ich wohl, Frau Kyriakides, allein mir fehlt der Glaube, dass hier tatsächlich die Absicht besteht, herauszufinden: Wer hat diese Attentate begangen, wer hat diese Leitungen zerstört, und was kann man tun, um den Schaden zu beseitigen oder zumindest zu mindern.

Nach meinen Informationen soll ja ein Strang der Nord-Stream-2-Leitung noch intakt sein. Wenn das stimmt, dann verstehe ich nicht, warum man nicht alles daransetzt, diese Leitungen in Betrieb zu nehmen, die Genehmigungen dafür zu erteilen, damit hier wirklich auch ein eklatanter Mangel in unserer Gasversorgung geschlossen wird. Da spielt es doch keine Rolle, ob das Gas jetzt von Russland kommt oder nicht. Es ist doch, dass wir Gas brauchen und dass es uns fehlt. Dann müssen wir doch alles tun, damit das Leiden unserer Bevölkerung ein Ende hat, und wir sägen doch letztendlich damit den Ast ab, auf dem wir sitzen.

Auch im Deutschen Bundestag wurden wegen dieser Untersuchungen Anfragen gestellt und es kamen keine nützlichen, sinnvollen Ergebnisse heraus. Es ist, als würde man das blockieren. Da drängt sich doch der Verdacht auf, als würde man das gar nicht wollen. Das ist für mich ein Symbol. Die Zerstörung dieser Infrastruktur, die für uns wirklich elementar wichtig ist, ist für mich ein Symbol, das auch hier in unserem Gebäude sichtbar wird.

Ich habe heute eine Besuchergruppe gehabt, und als die hier reingekommen sind, haben die gesagt: Was ist denn mit dem Louise Weiss-Gebäude los? Da fehlt ja die Hälfte! Das ist noch gar nicht fertig gebaut! Darauf habe ich ihnen erzählt, dass sich der Architekt hat inspirieren lassen von Bruegels babylonischem Turmbau. Da ist natürlich die Symbolik weit offen – genauso wie das damals zu einem Scheitern geführt hat: Dieser Turm wurde nie zu Ende gebaut.

Wollen wir hier tatsächlich mit dieser Geschichte zeigen, dass das, was wir hier bauen, nur Stückwerk ist, dass es nur für eine kurze Zeit ist und dass wir letztendlich gar nicht wollen, dass hier etwas Sinnvolles und etwas Vernünftiges gemacht wird? Das wäre eine Schande für Europa.

Ангел Джамбазки, *от името на групата ECR*. – Г-жо Председател, колега Гюнер, много навременен въпрос. На този въпрос може да отговорим по този начин. Това, което виждате, е снежна топка. Тази снежна топка я събрах отвън, пред Парламента. Не съм я донесъл да замерям Председателя, тази снежна топка е тук, за да покаже, че ……

(председателят прекъсва оратора)

President. – I am sorry, Mr Dzhambazki, according to our Rules you cannot hold anything in your hands. Please put it aside and then you can continue. Thank you very much.

Angel Dzhambazki, *on behalf of the ECR Group*. – It is snow. Well, it's because of global warming. And my question here was: where is your global warming, ladies and gentlemen? Outside is like Siberia and snow is falling down. And that's why we need to know who is behind the sabotage of this critical infrastructure. So your question is absolutely right and full on time, because we are not stupid people.

We need to ask two questions. The first question is: who benefits from this sabotage? And the second question is: who is capable of this sabotage? When we have these answers, we'll understand why all this is happening.

And now, about global warming: please let us know with data, and why are we forcing and forced to accept all this propaganda, all this idea that we are capable and we have to build our energy only by all these sources like wind, like sun, etc.? No, we need to explore our own resources. We need to export our own natural gas. We need to explore our own nuclear energy and to have our sovereign European energy. Because we need not to be dependent on outside suppliers. Thank you. Where is my ball?

Juozas Olekas, *on behalf of the S&D Group*. – Madam President, dear Commissioner, dear colleagues, I agree with the Commission that Europe has to do more to protect its critical infrastructure. Unfortunately, for too long, European Union countries were naive to believe that business interests alone will protect its valuable assets. Russian war in Ukraine showed that in time of the war, criminal regimes are ready to attack the critical infrastructure even if that hurts their own economic interests.

Yes, the Commission should identify critical infrastructure, but the Member States must increase their efforts to protect it. It is the Member States who have the means to do that. Unfortunately, some EU Member States, for economic or political reasons, are still too relaxed and ready to cooperate with the criminal regimes.

For a long time, from this podium, they have been telling Germany also that its addiction to the cheap Russian gas is dangerous. Now we see the consequence. Similar mistake Hungary is doing now by continuing its nuclear power station projects with Rosatom. In my view, a similar mistake was done by selling ownership of the EU ports to the Chinese companies. In times of conflict, these companies will become Trojan horses on the EU soil.

The EU should diversify its energy sources. It also must agree on the rules that stakes of its critical infrastructure companies cannot be sold to the state or private actors from non-democratic regimes. We also should work on the better physical protection of our critical infrastructure objects, including the necessary military means.

Joachim Stanisław Brudziński (ECR). – Pani Przewodnicząca! Szanowni Państwo! Proszę pozwolić na taką historyczną retrospekcję: Lenin kiedyś użył takiego określenia „poleznyje idioti". W latach 70. często używano określenia „useful idiots" w stosunku do tych, którzy na Zachodzie realizowali politykę, która była na rękę rosyjskim komunistom, Breżniewowi.

Proszę wybaczyć, ale czasami jak słucham niektórych przedstawicieli Parlamentu Europejskiego, oczywiście proszę tego nie traktować jako bezpośredni personalny atak, ale czasami odnoszę wrażenie, że tych „poleznych idiotov" naprawdę nie brakuje. Mówienie o tym, że to być może Polska, Ukraina, może Stany Zjednoczone. Powoływanie się tutaj na wpis skądinąd człowieka, który już takie dyrdymały wypisywał na Twitterze, że ręce opadają. Budowanie wokół takiego wpisu teorii, że to nie Rosja stała za tym atakiem, tylko być może ktoś inny, stawianie takich pytań – dla mnie, to jest moja opinia, odnoszę wrażenie, że tak jak już powiedziałem, tych „useful idiots" naprawdę nie brakuje.

Jakie są fakty? Jak podkreślają eksperci bezpieczeństwa cyberprzestrzeni, ataki nie zaczęły się w momencie rozpoczęcia wojny na Ukrainie. Cyberprzestrzeń, jak również infrastruktura krytyczna była celem rosyjskich ataków już od wielu lat. Analitycy do spraw bezpieczeństwa wykazali, że z chwilą tworzenia się koalicji międzynarodowej popierającej Ukrainę Rosja nasiliła ataki wymierzone w państwa wspierające Ukraińców. Wykazano próby włamania się do 128 organizacji w 42 państwach, w 29 przypadkach skuteczne. Takie są fakty.

Catch-the-eye procedure

Seán Kelly (PPE). – *A Uachtaráin*, we don't have conclusive evidence of who carried out the Nord Stream attacks. We have our suspicions. But whoever did it hadn't reckoned with the resilience of Germany, who announced that they were going to build four or five LNG terminals and are actually opening one on Saturday. In marked contrast to my own country, where we have a Shannon LNG project in the pipeline for 10 years, and it's still awaiting a decision and planning – a national embarrassment at this stage.

Also, we may not have conclusive evidence of who carried out the cyberattacks on our HSE last year in my country, but thankfully, as a rapporteur for the cybersecurity file in the European Parliament, we had a shadows meeting this week and we have come to a good arrangement which will help, as Andreas Schwab said, to have cross-border cooperation in fighting hackers.

Finally, I want to say we do know who's carrying out the attack on the Ukrainian electricity infrastructure. And it's barbaric and it's disgraceful. And I hope that we will follow the example of Andrzej Halicki and supply many more generators, hopefully funded by MEPs as well as others, to the Ukrainians to get over this winter and to win the war.

Maria Grapini (S&D). – Doamnă președintă, doamnă comisar, stimați colegi, cred că toată lumea știe că securitatea infrastructurii critice are competență și responsabilitate partajată. Evident, statele membre au obligațiile de a lua toate măsurile pentru a securiza, dar și Comisia, pentru că singuri nu putem, s-a spus aici, transfrontalier, companiile nu se pot singure apăra. De aceea cred că, doamnă comisar, primul lucru trebuie să clarificăm ce este de competența Comisiei și ce este de competența statelor membre și, în mod explicit, să se facă acest plan.

Am intrat în sezonul rece. Ce s-a întâmplat cu conducta Nord Stream se mai poate întâmpla. Oamenii nu pot să stea să înghețe în case.

Până la urmă, avem o piață internă. Asta a fost baza Uniunii Europene și trebuie să avem și o strategie europeană pentru energie și pentru toate celelalte resurse.

De aceea, eu cred că ar trebui mai multă cooperare și între Comisie și statele membre, și între statele membre, dar aceasta trebuie făcută coerent și nu făcută la întâmplare și să nu reacționăm doar atunci când se întâmplă ceva.

Mick Wallace (The Left). – Madam President, when Nord Stream was damaged, there was uproar from politicians and mainstream media across Europe for about 24 hours, and then it seemed to have disappeared. Now, for the life of me, I was shocked that it could go down the list of major items in the news so quickly.

Initially, of course, the Russians were blamed, but common sense kind of prevailed and the talk was that well if the Russians don't want any gas going through the pipelines, they can actually turn the tap off on their end. And if they wanted to blow it up, I don't think they would blow it up quite so close to Germany or Sweden.

So who did blow it up? This was one of the worst releases of methane in the history of mankind. It was environmental terrorism. I, for the life of me, don't understand why the EU doesn't want to know who did it. This is a disgrace. What is wrong with us? This is an unbelievable, destructive act and we all want to know who did it. Is it because we know the answer or is it because it's the wrong answer?

Stanislav Polčák (PPE). – Paní předsedající, sabotáže kritické infrastruktury jsou skutečně mimořádně ohrožující pro celkovou naši bezpečnost. Je evidentní, že kritická infrastruktura zrovna v těchto časech plní mimořádně důležitou úlohu a její bezpečnost, stabilita dodávek je v této době klíčová. Kritická infrastruktura má samozřejmě přeshraniční charakter a odpovědnost za její ochranu nesou především členské státy, ale je dobře, že jsme si uvědomili, že odpovědnost musí padat i na celou Evropskou unii. Já nechci spekulovat, kdo je pachatelem těchto útoků, ale rozhodně odmítám vyjádření mého kolegy Becka, že tímto pachatelem nemůže být Rusko. Já zde vidím celou řadu důvodů, proč by to mohlo být Rusko.

Rusko je globální kazisvět, vede naprosto nepřijatelnou agresi na Ukrajině, ničí tamnější infrastrukturu mimo to, že vraždí nevinné lidi a unáší děti. Co z toho plyne? Nepochybně naše reakce musí být rozhodná. Nenechme se uvrtat do spekulací a rozhodně chraňme naši kritickou infrastrukturu. Je to náš společný úkol.

Clare Daly (The Left). – Madam President, the explosion of the Nord Stream pipelines was one of the biggest acts of economic sabotage ever carried out on the European Union, not to mention the devastating environmental consequences.

So it is very, very strange that there's so little discussion about it. No appetite for an investigation, no appetite for accountability, for restitution, nothing, because already having voluntarily severed our links with Russian gas, as a result of the ridiculous sanctions which are costing Europeans more than Russians, the explosion now ensures that we won't be restarting that any time in the next few years.

Instead, we're going to be relying on filthy, environmentally devastating US LNG. And not only is it filthy, but it's four times the price that US citizens are paying for it. So a lot of people are joining the dots. Who has the most to gain? Who has the most to lose?

Without an independent investigation, those questions will continue to be asked. And we also need to draw the conclusion that the biggest threat on our energy infrastructure is militarism. War is not ended by war, but peace.

(End of catch-the-eye procedure)

Stella Kyriakides, *Member of the Commission*. – Madam President, dear Members, I think it's clear that we all share the same common purpose of strengthening the resilience of critical infrastructure, particularly given the geopolitical and security context.

And the Commission is fully playing its supporting role, coordinating work on awareness, on preparedness and response, and guiding the Member States on stress tests. We have been doing it since well before the sabotage of Nord Stream. Under the Security Union, we had already made a number of important proposals to increase the preparedness and response of Member States.

However, in the current threat landscape, we need to raise our game. These attacks were a wakeup call, and you will agree with me that the EU institutions have worked in record time on this issue.

As I have said, we already have the Council recommendation in place. First, to enhance preparedness with stress tests, a study taking stock of the undersea communications cables and the use of EU surveillance assets such as Copernicus and Galileo to support Member States in the monitoring of critical infrastructure and their immediate vicinities. Second, enhances our common response under the Union's Civil Protection Mechanism and the development of a blueprint on critical infrastructure, incident and crisis. And third, reinforces international cooperation on resilience, including with NATO.

We will help with best practices, guidance and methodologies and feed into the expertise of EU agencies and assets such as satellite surveillance. We will count on the support of the European Parliament for this.

President. – The debate is closed.

10. Erklärungen zur Abstimmung

President. – The next item is the explanations of vote.

Donnerstag, 15. Dezember 2022

10.1. Korruptionsverdacht gegen Katar und die umfassendere Notwendigkeit von Transparenz und Rechenschaftspflicht in den Organen der EU (B9-0580/2022, RC-B9-0581/2022, B9-0581/2022, B9-0582/2022, B9-0583/2022, B9-0584/2022, B9-0585/2022, B9-0587/2022)

Oral explanations of vote

Mick Wallace (The Left). – Madam President, everyone is horrified that money in bags was transferred to at least one MEP. I often wonder what planet you all live on. There's over 12 000 companies registered in Belgium as lobbyists. Now, if we put an average of five persons per company, that's about 60 000 lobbyists. What do you think they do? What do they do for a living? They lobby. They try to have influence over politicians, over public servants, so that decisions are made that suit their agenda.

And if you think that the money related to this scandal around Qatar is an exception, I'd ask you to think again. This has been going on for a long time and it's nothing new. And there's a lot of other aspects of what goes on in this House that should be investigated, but probably won't be.

Clare Daly (The Left). – Madam President, I voted for the resolution. Qatar's human rights record, whitewashed in exchange for bags of cash, is pretty scandalous. But it was also scandalous to see the LIBE Committee vote to give Qatar visas for Qatari oil, whitewashing their human rights record – two sides of the same coin.

The resolution isn't bad, but it could be a lot better. It feels to me that we had the opportunity to really look corruption and undue influence squarely in the eye and do something about it. But we didn't. There are actually some 48 000 lobbyists in Brussels seeking to influence EU institutions. The nearly 12 000 organisations on the EU lobby register have a combined annual lobbying budget of EUR 1.8 billion.

European defence policy has literally been written by these individuals. But instead of confronting that, the resolution dodges the question and talks solely about foreign interference. Interference is interference. Corruption is corruption. It's all rotten. It doesn't matter where it comes from. The influence of European money is also corrupting, and it's about time we tackled all of it.

Ангел Джамбазки (ECR). – Г-жо Председател, гласувах за тази резолюция, защото разкриването на този корупционен кръг, на тази коалиция, катарска корупция в средите на социалисти, демократи и на другите леви е истински скандал в Европейския парламент. Години наред слушаме обвинения за това как някакви много десни, крайно десни били взимали пари някъде извън ЕС, за да работят срещу него. Какво се оказа? Оказа се, че в средите на най-гласовитите борци срещу корупцията „крадецът е викал дръжте крадеца“. Оказа се, че истинската корупция е в тази партия, в тази група, която уж трябва да защитава правата на работниците и на трудещите се.

Това е огромно лицемерие, огромен скандал и огромна щета за Европейския парламент и за тези, които твърдяха, че са много некорумпирани, много чисти, много бели, много такива, недокоснати от вредните влияния. Обаче не трябва да спираме дотук. Трябва да бъде проверена тази група и другите подобни за това как и защо гласува подозрително по отношение, например, на пакета „Мобилност“ или на влияние на други, трети страни, като да речем, Република Северна Македония. Това също е много важно и трябва да се провери, защото мисля, че и там ще излязат много опасни неща.

Stanislav Polčák (PPE). – Paní předsedající, já nemusím nic měnit na svém projevu, který jsem zde v tomto sále mohl pronést 21. listopadu, kdy se projednávala otázka vztahů s Katarem. Samozřejmě, že tento skandál dopadá velmi negativně na důvěru občanů v Unii jako takovou, v instituce a samozřejmě také otřásá našimi vztahy s třetími zeměmi. Je to mimořádný skandál.

Bohužel já jsem o této rezoluci dnes nemohl hlasovat, protože jsem to v důsledku počasí nestihl. Nemohu se tudíž ani meritorně vyjádřit k tomuto hlasování. Samozřejmě bych podpořil tento návrh rezoluce.

Tak se alespoň omezím na to, že Vám všem přeji hezké Vánoce.

10.2. 90 Jahre nach dem Holodomor: Anerkennung der Massentötung durch Hunger als Völkermord (RC-B9-0559/2022, B9-0559/2022, B9-0560/2022, B9-0561/2022, B9-0564/2022, B9-0566/2022)

Oral explanations of vote

Seán Kelly (PPE). – *A Uachtaráin*, on 25 November this year, Europe commemorated the 90th anniversary of the Holodomor genocide in Ukraine. I was pleased to support this resolution, which remembers and expresses solidarity with the people of Ukraine who suffered in this tragedy. The treatment of the Ukrainian people during the Holodomor goes against the most basic of human rights – respect for human life, human dignity and freedom.

As Putin wages his war of aggression against Ukraine and pursues a revisionist historical narrative aimed at disproving Ukraine's independence from Russia, it is essential that this Chamber acknowledge the suffering of those in the Holodomor. In my own country, the Irish Seanad recently recognised the Holodomor as an act of genocide.

Words matter, and this acknowledgement is particularly important for the survivors of Holodomor and the families and relatives of the victims, as Ukrainians witnessed – once again – Russian brutality and violence against their country.

Vlad-Marius Botoș (Renew). – Doamna președintă, trebuie să recunoaștem și să ne cunoaștem istoria pentru a nu o repeta. Este dificil pentru mulți dintre noi să ne imaginăm cum poți să dorești distrugerea unui popor întreg. Holodomorul a fost real. Au murit milioane de ucraineni, în timp ce grâul lor era exportat de regimul sovietic. Foametea din 1932-1933, creată în mod artificial, a fost de fapt o armă în mâinile Moscovei pentru a-și urmări obiectivele în ceea ce privește colectivizarea. Am votat această rezoluție pentru că este momentul să facem dreptate, să numim acele evenimente ceea ce au fost ele: un genocid. Sunt ferm convins că nu ar trebui să ne oprim aici cu cercetarea istoriei în statele de dincolo de Cortina de Fier, că trebuie să vedem și celelalte atrocități comise de Stalin și de regimurile comuniste din Europa de Est, deportările, gulagul siberian, exterminarea intelectualității din țările noastre, din Europa de Est. Este momentul să începem să scoatem adevărul la lumină.

Ангел Джамбазки (ECR). – Г-жо Председател, гладоморът е престъпление срещу човечеството. Всъщност гладоморите са няколко, срещу украинската държава и народ те са поне два и са придружени от още престъпления на сталинисткия режим, като насилствени депортации, преместване на множество народи, на множество нации. Таврийските, запорожките българи, кримските българи са били репатрирани, както и много други народи в рамките на окупираните от Съветския съюз територии.

Дълги години тази истина се затаяваше, затулваше и се закриваше това чудовищно престъпление на съветския геноциден, античовешки, антихуманен режим срещу човечеството. Това беше тяхната, бих казал, извратена престъпна идея да смажат нациите, да наложат едно мултикултурно съветско общество, един съветски човек и го правеха с цената на престъпления срещу човечеството.

Затова се радвам, че най-сетне тази зала, която е доста мудна по тези въпроси, най-сетне се задвижи и призна това истинско престъпление срещу човечеството. Оттук нататък трябва да се търси извинение и разбира се, компенсации.

10.3. Verstärkung des Mehrjährigen Finanzrahmens 2021-2027 (A9-0281/2022 - Jan Olbrycht, Margarida Marques)

Oral explanations of vote

Donnerstag, 15. Dezember 2022

Seán Kelly (PPE). – A Uachtaráin, táim i bhfabhar feabhsúchán ar fhrámaíocht airgeadais ilbhliantúil 2021-2028. Níos lú na 2 bhliain ó shin glacadh leis an bhfrámaíocht airgeadais ilbhliantúil. Anois tá formhór sholúbthachtaí agus teorainneacha na frámaíochta úsáidte i ndiaidh na ngéarchéimeanna éagsúla a thit amach le déanaí. Sa tuairisc, teastaíonn ón bParlaimint go mbeadh athbhreithniú cuimsitheach le linn an chéad cheathrú de 2023 chun a dheimhniú go mbeadh go leor solúbthachta chun freagairt thapa a dhéanamh i ngéarchéim agus mar fhreagairt ar iarmhairtí chogadh na Rúise san Úcráin. Cuireann an tuairisc béim ar neamh-chomhsheasmhacht mhaolú agus atheagrú sholúbthacht an bhuiséid. Ina theannta sin athneartaíonn an tuairisc tábhacht na Parlaiminte mar institiúid i gcreatbhuiséad an Aontais.

Vlad-Marius Botoș (Renew). – Doamna președintă, planul financiar multianual are nevoie de o mai mare flexibilitate pentru ca Uniunea Europeană să fie pregătită pentru eventuale crize. Și vedem, și resimțim câte crize ne-au lovit în acești ani. Acești ultimi trei ani ne-au arătat că, în anumite situații, este nevoie de acțiune urgentă la nivel european, de instrumente de finanțare care pot fi folosite rapid pentru minimizarea impactului negativ asupra cetățenilor. Aceste instrumente trebuie să fie totuși de sine stătătoare și să nu ia din fondurile de coeziune destinate dezvoltării regionale, cum s-a întâmplat până acum. Politica de coeziune trebuie să fie destinată în continuare creșterii comunităților și a nivelului de trai în regiunile rămase în urmă. Această rezoluție este una binevenită, iar analiza la care și-au adus contribuția toate comisiile de lucru din Parlamentul European și cer Comisiei Europene să găsească soluțiile potrivite pentru flexibilitatea de care este nevoie, punând totodată pe primul loc o mai mare transparență și responsabilitate în cheltuirea fondurilor Uniunii Europene.

Mick Wallace (The Left). – Madam President, of course the multiannual financial framework is a bit out of date and has shortcomings because of COVID and the Ukraine war. The report acknowledges that 21.9% of the EU population is at risk of poverty and social exclusion, and the energy poverty is certain to worsen as a consequence of the war. But what's the EU doing to end the war? Absolutely nothing. We're flooding Ukraine with arms at a great cost to our own citizens and at great cost to the lives of so many Ukrainians.

Now paragraph 39 of the report calls for an increase in the budget ceiling for security and defence. It advocates spending more money on weapons and war, money that could be spent instead on climate mitigation and adaptation, public transport, health or education. There is no military solution to the crisis in Ukraine, and the policy of flooding Ukraine with weapons is madness. And if we want to fight Russia down to the last Ukrainian and make our own people suffer in the meantime just to support a US-NATO proxy war, it's about time we copped on to ourselves.

Ангел Джамбазки (ECR). – Г-жо Председател, гласувах убедено против този доклад, защото както обикновено той няма никаква връзка с разума и със здравия смисъл и е насочен към утопии, зеленизми, климатизми и други теми, които обричат европейците на повече енергийна бедност, на повече разходи и на неконкурентна икономика. Това, за което говорихме преди малко, а именно критична инфраструктура и така нататък, е свързано с пораженията, които нанася направената политика от Европейския съюз и Европейския парламент, която се насочва само и единствено към това да спонсорира неща, които нямат нищо общо със здравия разум. Това обаче е мотивът.

Сега в заключение ми позволете, виждам, че не се движи времето, но го отдавам на компютъра. Сега ми позволете да Ви благодаря за търпението, лично на Вас, г-жо Председател, да Ви се извиня за лекото нарушение на правилата (вярвам, че една снежна топка няма толкова да разклати Вашата здрава психика) и да Ви пожелая лично, семейно щастие, весели християнски, Коледни, Рождествени и Новогодишни празници, и лично и семейно щастие!

Clare Daly (The Left). – Madam President, I voted against the Multiannual Financial Framework. Two years have passed since the adoption of it. Obviously, our budget is again under strain, faced with multiple crises that are piling up, the responsibility for which largely, in many instances, is a result of our own policies or, indeed, the policies of our so-called friends. We had the US Inflation Reduction Act. Maybe this would make us realise that the misnamed free trade rules are being flouted by the world's biggest economy and that these rules are stifling most of the world. And we can continue by almost obsessively borrowing until the crash, or we can change direction.

It is time to learn the lesson from the phenomenal rise in energy crisis that has put so many European citizens in critical situations motivated by geopolitical games. We need to tackle the big companies that are profiteering off the lives of people and the biggest ones who have made Europe the most unsafe is the military industrial complex. Yet they're the ones who got a huge boost out of this file, which is why I voted against it.

10.4. Beratungen des Petitionsausschusses im Jahr 2021 (A9-0271/2022 - Loránt Vincze)

Oral explanations of vote

Seán Kelly (PPE). – Madam President, here we go again. I was pleased to support this report from my colleague. And on the outcome of the Committee of Petitions' deliberations during 2021.

The focus this week in the Parliament has been on increasing transparency, and rightly so. I believe that the work of the PETI Committee should be emphasised and publicised further.

The Treaties confer on all citizens the right to submit a petition on any matter within the EU's competences that directly affects them. This provides an important avenue for EU citizens, which I have successfully used myself, on behalf of some constituents.

We must ensure that EU citizens are aware of this right. To be effective, measures aimed at improving transparency and their outcomes must be communicated clearly to citizens.

I welcome the acknowledgement in the report also that when citizens do petition the committee, their request must be dealt with in a timely and consistent manner.

And finally, I just want to compliment yourself, President Dita, for the manner in which you handled today's voting session. It could have got out of hand. It could have become very boisterous if you hadn't handled it so firmly. And also it does no harm to see you dealing firmly with colleague 'snowman' Dzhambazki and basically make him put away his snowball. Happy Christmas to you all.

Clare Daly (The Left). – Madam President, he must be looking for a big Christmas present or a load of speaking time next year. But in any case, I voted for this file. I think it's a great committee. Often people are disappointed that their petitions aren't selected and one of the things that I think we need to look at is the idea that the non-aligned members of the committee, and there are five of them, don't have the right to nominate any petition. And I think this excludes a whole number of our citizens who would like their petitions heard.

The issue was brought home very clearly to me this week when I was contacted by a Ukrainian student who was very grateful to the European Union for allowing him to travel and study at reduced rates in Latvia and in other European countries. But since the Ukrainian Government changed the rules, preventing male university students from leaving the country, tens of thousands of them have been prevented from pursuing their education. And they have gone online with a really important petition – where they've got tens of thousands of signatures – asking for their right to education to be seen through. They've got the support of the European students' unions and, indeed, the Ukrainian student union. So I think this is something that we should use our offices here to help as it is a really important issue.

Mick Wallace (The Left). – Madam President, speaking of the need for transparency, I also think it's incredibly important. And I want to raise an issue that shows a serious lack of it in Ireland. A group of homeowners from Donegal lodged a petition with the Committee on Petitions relating to what's called the 'mica scandal', where there's a huge lack of surveillance and regulation on quarries in Donegal, and an inferior concrete block was produced which contained mica, which ended up causing serious damage to over 7 000 houses. And people are looking for some recompense from the Irish Government.

A report was done which was really critical of how quarries were operated – critical of the lack of regulation – but then when the government published the report, they took out a lot of the harsh criticism. These people are looking for some accountability and they want the Irish Government held to account for their lack of transparency on this issue.

President. – That concludes the item.

11. Genehmigung des Protokolls der laufenden Sitzung und Übermittlung der angenommenen Texte

President. – The minutes of this sitting will be submitted to Parliament for approval at the beginning of its next part-session. If there are no objections, I shall forward the resolutions adopted at today's sitting to the persons and bodies named in the resolutions.

12. Zeitpunkt der nächsten Sitzungen

President. – The next part-session will take place from 16–19 January 2023.

13. Schluss der Sitzung

President. – Let me wish you all Merry Christmas and Happy New Year, and on behalf of all of us, I would like to thank the staff in the European Parliament – the interpreters, Secretariat, administration, drivers, ushers, everybody who makes our life easier. Thank you so much and have nice holidays.

(The sitting closed at 15.50)

14. Unterbrechung der Sitzungsperiode

President. – I declare adjourned the session of the European Parliament.

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