Resolution on the climate change conference in Durban (COP 17)

2011/2646(RSP) - 16/11/2011 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

Following the debate held during the sitting of 15 November 2011, the European Parliament adopted by 532 votes to 76 against with 43 abstentions a resolution on the climate change conference in Durban (COP 17).

The resolution had been tabled on behalf of the EPP, S&D, ALDE, Greens/EFA, and GUE/NGL groups.

Key Objectives: Members call on Heads of State and Government worldwide to **demonstrate real political leadership** and urge **the EU publicly and unequivocally to confirm its strong commitment to the Kyoto Protocol** and to take all necessary steps to **avoid any gap between Kyoto Protocol commitment periods**. The EU must to declare openly prior to Durban that it is ready to continue with the second commitment period of the Kyoto Protocol and, further, to **define concrete steps to bridge 'the gigatonne gap',** i.e. the difference between the current ambition levels and those required to keep global warming below 2ºC. Members call for the COP to agree on a time-bound mandate to secure a legally binding agreement under the Convention to be implemented as soon as possible, and at the latest by 2015. They recall that the industrialised countries need to reduce their emissions by 25-40% below 1990 levels by 2020, while the developing countries as a group should achieve a substantial deviation below the currently predicted emissions growth rate, of the order of 15-30%, by 2020.

Progress at the Durban Conference also means **further implementing the Cancún Agreements**, in establishing the peak date for global emissions and a global emissions reduction goal for 2050, defining a clear pathway towards 2050, including intermediate global emissions reduction goals. Members reiterates that, according to the scientific evidence presented by the IPCC, the 2ºC objective requires that global greenhouse gas emissions peak by 2015 at the latest and be reduced by at least 50% as compared with 1990 by 2050 and continue to decline thereafter.

Parliament welcomes the roadmap for moving to a competitive low-carbon economy in 2050, setting long-term targets reconfirming the EU's objective of reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 80-95% by 2050 in order to keep climate change below 2°C. It notes the conclusion that 80% of the reduction by 2050 has to be achieved internally within the EU and that a linear reduction makes economic sense. It also supports the Commission's view that, regardless of the outcome of the international negotiations, it is in the **EU's own interest to aim for a climate protection target of over 20%,** since this would have the simultaneous effect of creating green jobs and boosting growth and security. Members note that European countries face critical choices to preserve their future prosperity and security, and moving to a domestic greenhouse gas emissions reduction target which is in line with the EU's climate objectives can be combined with a healthier economy, and an increase in green jobs and innovation.

Accordingly, on the basis of realistic expectations as to the likely outcomes of the COP 17, Parliament calls on the EU and Member States to conclude as many **partial agreements** as possible, in areas such as science, technology transfer and LULUCF, in order to maintain overall positive progress. It wants to see the development of a principle of 'climate justice', insisting that the greatest injustice would occur if the EU did not tackle climate change, because poor people, in poor countries would particularly suffer.

EU Strategy: Parliament calls on the EU to take the lead and push for an ambitious EU climate policy which reduces climate change in order to demonstrate the advantages of such a policy and encourage other countries to follow suit. It stresses the importance of the EU speaking with 'one voice'. It highlights the

fact that if the EU is reluctant to proceed to a second commitment period under the Kyoto Protocol, a very negative message will be sent to developing countries. In order to provide new impetus and leverage for future negotiations, additional emphasis should be placed on the way that combating climate change can also offer economic possibilities and a pathway towards more resource-efficient societies. Members call for an agreement in Durban with strong political and financial commitments to assist developing countries in capacity-building. They also stress the importance of the systematic integration of gender equality as a cross-cutting issue.

Building on the Cancún Agreements: Parliament calls on the Parties to use the Durban Conference to bring into operation the necessary agreed mechanisms, such as the Green Climate Fund and the Adaptation Committee, to focus on the development of the Technology Mechanism (including the Climate Technology Centre and Network) and the registry to record mitigation measures taken by developing countries seeking international support, and to address the remaining key issues and make progress on the issue of the legal form of a future post-2012 framework, including a timeline for securing agreement on that framework. It notes that t there are still gaps in sectoral and non-market based approaches, and emphasises the need to address the production and consumption of HFCs under the Montreal Protocol.

Financing: Parliament recalls that developed countries have committed themselves to providing new and additional resources from public and private sources amounting to at least USD 30 billion in the period 2010-2012 and USD 100 billion per year by 2020. It calls on the Commission and Member States to honour their commitments and **guarantee that resources for adaptation and mitigation come on top of the 0.7% ODA target** and specify how much of the commitment will come from public funding. It calls, further, on the COP to define a framework for climate financing during the intermediate period from 2013 to 2020. The EU is asked ensure transparent reporting on the implementation of 'fast-start' financing. Members stress **the need to avoid a financing gap after 2012** (when the fast-start finance period ends) and to work towards the **identification of a path for scaling up climate funding from 2013 to 2020**. They call for the promotion of private-sector contributions, the use of innovative sources of financing, for a tax on financial transactions to be established at international level and for the revenues to be used in particular to support climate action in developing countries. However, they recall that only public funding is crucial for reaching the most vulnerable communities struggling to adapt to climate change, and help poor countries adopt sustainable development strategies, and the Commission and Member State governments must make sure this funding is additional to existing aid targets.

Parliament calls on COP to bring the **Green Climate Fund** into full operation at the Durban Conference and to develop it in a way that ensures that the new fund is capable of supporting transformational changes towards low-carbon and climate-resilient development in developing countries.

Transformation towards a sustainable economy: Parliament is concerned that the financial crisis affecting most of the industrialised economies has curbed the level of attention of governments towards the international climate negotiations in Durban. It considers that the EU's effort to transform its economy must not falter e.g. in order to avoid job leakage and in particular green job leakage, and that the EU must convince its partners worldwide, including China and the USA, that emission reductions are feasible without losing competitiveness and jobs, in particular if performed collectively. The resolution stresses the need to develop a holistic raw-materials and resource strategy and calls on the EU to lead by example. It also highlights the role of the CDM for European industry to achieve emission abatements and to accelerate technology transfer.

Research and technology: the development of breakthrough technologies holds the key to fighting climate change and, at the same time, convincing the EU's partners worldwide that emissions reductions are feasible without losing competitiveness and jobs. Members call for an international commitment to increase R&D investments in breakthrough technologies. Europe should lead by example by substantially

increasing expenditure devoted to research on climate-friendly and energy-efficient industrial and energy technologies and Europe should develop close scientific cooperation in this field with international partners, such as the BRIC countries and the United States.

Land Use, Land Use Change and Forestry (LULUCF): Members note that substantial differences in scope, structure and design exist between LULUCF reporting under the UNFCCC Convention and LULUCF accounting under the Kyoto Protocol, undermining Parties' climate change mitigation efforts. They also note that accounting for 'forest management' activity, which is responsible for the majority of LULUCF sector emissions, is voluntary under the Kyoto Protocol. They call for an agreement in Durban on robust rules on LULUCF that: (i) are designed to deliver emissions reductions from forestry and land use; (ii) require that Annex I Parties account for any increases in emissions from LULUCF and (iii) are consistent with the Parties' existing commitments to protect and enhance greenhouse gas sinks and reservoirs. LULUCF reporting must be referenced to a fixed historical base year/period and applied across the Kyoto Protocol and Convention tracks, and Parliament calls for the mandatory inclusion of emissions from forest management in Annex I Parties' post-2012 LULUCF reduction commitments.

R**educed Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation:** Parliament urges the COP to define a mechanism to mobilise further funding for REDD+ from public as well as private sources. It calls on the EU to make sure that REDD + includes safeguard mechanisms ensuring that the rights of the people living in the forests are not violated and that the loss of forests is efficiently halted, insisting that REDD+ should not undermine any advance made so far with FLEGT (Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade), especially regarding forest governance, clarification and recognition of customary tenures.

Maritime transport and international aviation: Parliament calls on the EU to push for ambitious targets for emissions reductions in shipping to encourage further progress in the International Maritime Organisation in taking steps towards globally binding reductions in emissions from maritime transport within the UNFCCC. It also calls on the EU to ensure that the full impact of aviation is taken into account in an international agreement in the form of binding reduction targets for aviation, and urges all actors to make sure that these targets are backed up by enforcement structures. It believes that resolution of this issue has become increasingly pressing and supports the inclusion of aviation in the European emissions trading system.

European Parliament delegation: Parliament finds it unacceptable that Members of the European Parliament have been unable to attend the EU coordination meetings at previous Conferences of the Parties. It expects at least the chairs of the European Parliament delegation to be allowed to attend EU coordination meetings in Durban.