Basic information

2006/2642(RSP) RSP - Resolutions on topical subjects	Procedure completed
Resolution on the export of toxic waste to Africa **Subject** 3.70.13 Dangerous substances, toxic and radioactive wastes (storage, transport) **Geographical area** ACP countries	

Key players

Council of the European Union

Council configuration	Meetings	Date
Agriculture and Fisheries	2763	2006-11-20
Environment	2757	2006-10-23

Key events

Date	Event	Reference	Summary
23/10/2006	Resolution/conclusions adopted by Council		Summary
25/10/2006	Debate in Parliament		
26/10/2006	Decision by Parliament	T6-0457/2006	Summary
26/10/2006	Results of vote in Parliament		
26/10/2006	End of procedure in Parliament		
20/11/2006	Resolution/conclusions adopted by Council		Summary

Technical information

Procedure reference	2006/2642(RSP)
Procedure type	RSP - Resolutions on topical subjects
Procedure subtype	Resolution on statement
Legal basis	Rules of Procedure EP 136-p2
Stage reached in procedure	Procedure completed

Documentation gateway

European Parliament

Document type	Committee	Reference	Date	Summary
Motion for a resolution		B6-0545/2006	25/10/2006	
Motion for a resolution		B6-0571/2006	25/10/2006	
Motion for a resolution		B6-0573/2006	25/10/2006	
Motion for a resolution		B6-0574/2006	25/10/2006	
Motion for a resolution		B6-0575/2006	25/10/2006	
Motion for a resolution		B6-0576/2006	25/10/2006	
Text adopted by Parliament, topical subjects		T6-0457/2006	26/10/2006	Summary

Resolution on the export of toxic waste to Africa

2006/2642(RSP) - 20/11/2006

The Council recognises the importance of the effective implementation, including enforcement, of the Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and Their Disposal and reaffirms its firm commitment to such implementation.

It expressed deep concern at the recent incident in Ivory Coast, which again alerted the world to the grave implications of illegal shipments of waste for developing countries and reiterates the willingness of the EU to continue to provide its assistance, together with the United Nations, to protect human health and the environment at the places affected.

It recalls that the polluter pays principle is a guiding principle at European and international level and affirms the importance for the generator and the holder of the waste to manage the waste in a way that guarantees a high level of protection of the environment and human health. It notes that the 1995 amendment to the Basel Convention which bans hazardous wastes exports for final disposal and recovery from Basel Convention Parties which are EU, OECD members and Liechtenstein to any other Parties to the Basel Convention ("the Ban Amendment") is in force for all Member States, because it has been fully implemented by the Waste Shipment Regulation.

Furthermore, the Council:

- encourages States which have not already done so to ratify the Ban Amendment in order to facilitate its early entry into force;

- reiterates the importance of the EU Waste Shipment Regulation, which explicitly bans such exports;

- notes with concern that its provisions are not sufficiently complied with and enforced and that a significant risk of serious incidents persists, as recent inspection campaigns have shown;

- recognises that, while the recent revision of the Regulation enables better enforcement and co-operation both at national and EU level, there remains an urgent need to increase compliance and to improve inspections in all Member States and in particular at EU ports to properly implement the export ban on hazardous waste;

- stresses the urgent need to significantly reduce illegal waste shipments;

- considers that, where necessary, current efforts to improve implementation, including awareness-raising and training, may have to be strengthened with a view to ensuring, inter alia, that the necessary measures are taken, especially in sea ports, to establish an adequate enforcement capacity to monitor and control waste shipments;

- encourages Member States to strengthen their cooperation within the IMPEL-TFS (Implementation and Enforcement of Environmental Law - Transfrontier Shipment) network in order to achieve better enforcement of the EU Waste Shipment Regulation with regard to illegal shipment of waste;

- recommends that the European Community and the Member States should aim at reaching the following objectives with regard to matters on the COP-8 agenda and related issues:

- § The Ban Amendment (Decision III/1) and Illegal Shipment of Waste;
- § Ship dismantling;
- § Technical guidelines on persistent organic pollutants waste and globally-harmonised forms for the notification and movement of waste;
- § Co-operation and synergies;
- § Resource use and mobilisation.

Resolution on the export of toxic waste to Africa

2006/2642(RSP) - 26/10/2006 - Text adopted by Parliament, topical subjects

The European Parliament adopted a joint resolution on the export of toxic waste to Africa. It pointed out that around 500 tonnes of chemical waste have been dumped in several areas in the neighbourhood of Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire, where 5 million people live. Eight people have died so far and some 85 000 have been taken to hospital for treatment for nosebleeds, diarrhoea, nausea, eye irritation and breathing difficulties. The consequences of this dumping of toxic waste may be far-reaching, including soil contamination and surface and groundwater pollution. This poisoning has affected between 9 000 and 23 000 children, who will need medical assistance and health care and other measures to clean up the environment where they live will be required. The toxic waste in question was dumped by a Greek-owned, Panamanian-flagged tanker leased by Trafigura Beheer B.V., a Netherlands-based company. The company had the opportunity to dispose of the waste in a legal and safe manner in Europe, but chose a cheaper alternative in Côte d'Ivoire. Parliament felt that Africa is a dumping ground for all kinds of hazardous waste and most African countries do not have strong regulations to protect the environment and the livelihood of their populations against hazardous waste.

Parliament called on the Commission, the Netherlands and Côte d'Ivoire to investigate this case fully, to establish responsibility at all levels, to bring to justice those responsible for this environmental crime and to ensure full remediation of the environmental contamination, as well as compensation for the victims. The EU institutions and the Member States must take all necessary measures to provide full assistance to the population affected and in particular to children, by using all available means of support, cooperation and civil protection.

Both Community legislation and international conventions were clearly violated in the case of the exporting of hazardous waste to Abidjan, and Parliament therefore called on the Commission and the Member States to take all necessary measures to ensure full enforcement of the existing waste shipment legislation. In addition:

-the Commission and the Member States concerned must make public all the bilateral agreements they have concluded with non-OECD countries for the shipping of waste;

-the Commission was asked make legislative proposals to close the loopholes in the current regime on hazardous waste so as to end shipments to non-OECD countries of waste electrical and electronic equipment and obsolete ships and vessels;

-the Commission should collect information on the illicit trafficking in, and dumping of, such hazardous wastes and products in African and other developing countries, and make proposals to counter it. It is called upon to produce annually a list of countries and transnational corporations engaged in the illicit dumping of toxic waste and products in African and other developing countries.

Resolution on the export of toxic waste to Africa

2006/2642(RSP) - 23/10/2006

The Finnish Presidency adopted conclusions recalling the importance of the effective implementation, including enforcement, of the Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and Their Disposal and reaffirms its firm commitment to such implementation.

It expresses deep concern at the recent incident in Ivory Coast, which again alerted the world to the grave implications of illegal shipments of waste for developing countries and reiterates the willingness of the EU to continue to provide its assistance, together with the United Nations, to protect human health and the environment at the places affected.

Against this background, the Council:

- recalls that the polluter pays principle is a guiding principle at European and international level;
- affirms the importance for the generator and the holder of the waste to manage the waste in a way that guarantees a high level of protection of the environment and human health;
- notes that the 1995 amendment to the Basel Convention which bans hazardous wastes exports for final disposal and recovery from Basel Convention Parties which are EU, OECD members and Liechtenstein to any other Parties to the Basel Convention ("the Ban Amendment") is in force for all Member States, because it has been fully implemented by the Waste Shipment Regulation. It encourages States which have not already done so to ratify the Ban Amendment in order to facilitate its early entry into force;
- expresses concern at the fact that, while the EU is implementing strict requirements for disposal, recovery and recycling of waste, the control of waste exports has not kept pace with these developments;
- reiterates the importance of the EU Waste Shipment Regulation, which explicitly bans such exports;
- notes with concern that its provisions are not sufficiently complied with and enforced and that a significant risk of serious incidents persists, as recent inspection campaigns have shown and recognises that, while the recent revision of the Regulation enables better enforcement and co-operation both at national and EU level, there remains an urgent need to increase compliance and to improve inspections in all Member States and in particular at EU ports to properly implement the export ban on hazardous waste; and stresses the urgent need to significantly reduce illegal waste shipments;

- considers that, where necessary, current efforts to improve implementation, including awareness-raising and training, may have to be strengthened with a view to ensuring, inter alia, that the necessary measures are taken, especially in sea ports, to establish an adequate enforcement capacity to monitor and control waste shipments;

- encourages Member States to strengthen their cooperation within the IMPEL-TFS (Implementation and Enforcement of Environmental Law - Transfrontier Shipment) network in order to achieve better enforcement of the EU Waste Shipment Regulation with regard to illegal shipment of waste.

In view of the upcoming 8th Conference of the Parties in Nairobi (COP 8), the Council recommends that the European Community and the Member States should aim at reaching the following objectives with regard to matters on the COP-8 agenda and related issues: (i) the Ban Amendment (Decision III/1) and Illegal Shipment of Waste; (ii) ship dismantling; (iii) technical guidelines on persistent organic pollutants waste and globally-harmonised forms for the notification and movement of waste; (iv) co-operation and synergies; (v) resource use and mobilisation.