



**PEŁNE SPRAWOZDANIE Z OBRAD 18 CZERWCA 2020 R.**

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## PEŁNE SPRAWOZDANIE Z OBRAD 18 CZERWCA 2020 R.

**PRESIDÊNCIA: PEDRO SILVA PEREIRA**

*Vice-Presidente*

### 1. Otwarcie posiedzenia

*(A sessão é aberta às 9h03)*

### 2. Ogłoszenie wyników głosowania: patrz protokół

### 3. Skutki kryzysu COVID-19 dla polityki zagranicznej – Ustawa Chińskiej Republiki Ludowej o bezpieczeństwie narodowym dla Hongkongu i konieczność obrony przez UE wysokiego stopnia autonomii Hongkongu – Reakcja UE na ewentualną aneksję przez Izrael części ziem na Zachodnim Brzegu (debata)

**Presidente.** – Podemos agora passar aos debates previstos na nossa ordem do dia e, como sabem, começamos com um debate conjunto sobre as declarações do Vice-Presidente da Comissão e Alto Representante da União para os Negócios Estrangeiros e a Política de Segurança, a quem agradeço a sua presença, declarações relativas às consequências da crise da COVID-19 para a política externa (2020/2646(RSP)), também sobre a lei da segurança nacional da República Popular da China para Hong Kong e a necessidade da União Europeia de defender o elevado grau de autonomia de Hong Kong (2020/2665(RSP)) e ainda sobre a resposta da União Europeia à possível anexação da Cisjordânia por Israel (2020/2687(RSP)).

Gostaria de recordar aos senhores deputados de que neste debate conjunto não haverá procedimentos «catch the eye» nem perguntas na forma de «cartão azul».

Dito isto, passo então a palavra ao Sr. Vice-Presidente da Comissão e Alto Representante da União para os Negócios Estrangeiros e a Política de Segurança, Josep Borrell, a quem, mais uma vez, agradeço a sua presença.

**Josep Borrell Fontelles**, *Vicepresidente de la Comisión / Alto Representante de la Unión para Asuntos Exteriores y Política de Seguridad.* – Señor presidente, señoras y señores diputados,

Mr President, we have three issues to discuss. I will go directly to the three of them.

First, from the European Union response to the coronavirus crisis, it's clear that the global pandemic needs global solutions, and the European Union must be at the centre of the response. To do so, in April we launched a Team Europe response to support our partner countries facing the pandemic. I have already presented this in your committee meetings. On 8 June, we discussed at the Foreign Affairs Council on Development how to move forward quickly and we mobilised EUR 35 billion to help the most vulnerable countries in Africa, Latin America and our neighbourhood. One could say that it is not fresh money but just redirecting already-allocated resources, but anyway, it was very important to give priority to the pandemic.

The extension of the key European Union programmes for refugees is also crucial during this crisis, and we appreciate Parliament's efforts to approve the necessary Draft Amending Budget in July to allocate more than EUR 400 million in support of Syrian refugees.

In the new MMF proposal, we have included a top-up for external action policies, financed through the Next Generation European Union instrument. Part of this funding will go to humanitarian aid, and part to the provision of a higher ceiling for the External Action Guarantee under the Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument (NDICI).

We have also provided for an additional provisioning of EUR 10.5 billion, and with that, we could provide guarantees up to EUR 130 billion under European Fund for Sustainable Development Plus (EFSD+) operations, as well as additional macro-financial assistance and loans to third countries. This will allow us to help to boost sustainable and green investment in our partner countries worldwide. I hope I can count on your support so that we can maintain an ambitious level of resources for our EU external action. Let me say that it is badly needed – because this crisis will be a crisis of biblical consequences. Look at the situation, for example, in Latin America, where things are becoming worse. Happily, in Africa, things are not as bad as expected. But, in general, both health and economic consequences of this crisis will be very important and, I am afraid, long lasting.

The second issue in our debate today is about the People's Republic of China and the national security law for Hong Kong. Let me frame my answer on a very evident fact. COVID has accelerated existing trends, with tensions between China and the US growing by the day, and I want to repeat what I have already said and written many times: that Europe needs to find its own way when it comes to balancing its relations towards both actors. Yesterday, the French Minister of Foreign Relations was saying more or less the same thing in the French press and I think it's quite a shared point of view at the Foreign Affairs Council.

But independence does not mean equidistance. The transatlantic partnership remains the most important and strategic relationship for the European Union. We maintain divergences with the current administration in the US, that's clear, evident, with regard to their stand on multilateralism about the International Criminal Court, for example, the last one. Nevertheless, we seek positive engagement wherever possible.

Our relationship with China does not fit into a single category. I am sorry for the people who would like to have simple schemes. This is not possible. This is complex, and complex it will remain, and it needs to be based on trust, transparency and reciprocity. China is clearly a necessary partner, like it or not, to solve global challenges such as the global pandemic and climate change. No one can imagine that we can solve climate change without a strong commitment from China's side. At the same time, human rights remain a contentious issue in our relations. I raised these concerns on the situation in Hong Kong with the Chinese Foreign Minister last week. We had a long conversation: more than three hours face to face. I think it was a useful and frank conversation about all issues of a complex relationship and, for sure, the adoption of a security law for Hong Kong is not in conformity with China's international commitments, particularly under the Sino-British Joint Declaration enshrined in the Basic Law of Hong Kong.

Pressure on Hong Kong's autonomy and fundamental freedoms affect us directly. It's not just a matter for the Hong Kong people. It's a matter of values, principles and the need to uphold international commitments, seriously undermining the «one country, two systems» principle and Hong Kong's autonomy. As you may be aware, I made this point very clear in my declaration on behalf of the EU27 on 22 and 29 May. On that issue, there was unanimity, something that is less and less frequent in the debates at the Foreign Affairs Council. I also raised these matters in the United Nations Security Council when I had the opportunity to address this body, on the very day this decision was adopted. I am at your disposal during the question and answers to discuss the specific measures taken by the EU and to go deeper into this issue.

On the third point, on the possible Israeli annexation in the West Bank: let me turn now to this issue, the possible annexation by Israel of parts of the occupied Palestinian territory. There, our position is clear, although, once again, it's difficult to find unanimity. But there is very much a strong majority of countries that continue supporting a negotiated two-state solution based on international parameters and considering that any annexation would be against international law.

Consequently, we strongly urge Israel to refrain from any unilateral decisions that would lead to this annexation of any part of occupied Palestinian territory. I had the opportunity of expressing this point of view in my phone calls to the new Ministers of Foreign Affairs and of Defence of Israel.

This would constitute a serious violation of international law. In March, in Geneva, 27 Member States agreed on that. At the last Foreign Affairs Council, unhappily, unanimity was not found on this same issue, but as I said, very much a strong majority of countries continue to support this principle.

Second, this would cause real damage to the prospects for a two-state solution.

Third, it would negatively affect regional stability, our relations with Israel, and between Israel and Arab states, and potentially the security of Israel, which is something not negotiable for us. Let me stress that also. And finally, from a European Union perspective, annexation would inevitably have significant consequences for the close relationship we currently enjoy with Israel.

My time is reaching the end. I will stick to my time. I will not prejudice today the specific impact of a possible annexation, but let me underline that the European Union has its own obligations and responsibilities under international and European law, and as agreed in the mid-May Foreign Affairs Council, we engage with our Israeli partners to avoid such a step before it's too late. We are using all our diplomatic capacities in order to put pressure for that not to happen. As I said, I opened a constructive conversation with Alternate Prime Minister Gantz and Foreign Minister Ashkenazi, where I expressed in the same terms as I explained to you the gravity of such an announcement. I have also been in close contact with the Palestinian leadership and other key Arab representatives. Several EU Foreign Ministers passed the same messages on, and we held an important discussion with the US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo earlier this week. This issue took an important part of the one-and-a-half-hour discussion with Mike Pompeo. In the coming weeks and months, we will continue engaging with the parties and the international community in support of a negotiated two-state solution based on the international parameters and which ensures equal rights for all.

Thank you very much, Mr President, for giving me half a minute more. Thank you for your attention. I need to stop here. I think my time is over, but I will remain at your disposal for the many issues I am sure you will raise during our dialogue.

**Presidente.** – Muito obrigado, Senhor Vice-Presidente, pelas declarações sobre temas muito importantes todos eles.

**David McAllister**, *on behalf of the PPE Group.* – Mr President, as I am convinced that we should stand up for fostering the European Union strategic autonomy for promoting multilateral solutions and for defending our interests in a spirit of solidarity, I welcome today's debate on the foreign policy consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic.

We all know that this pandemic will not only lead to more medical, social and economic changes of a tremendous dimension, but it will also, as the High Representative and Vice-President, Josep Borrell, has pointed out, also be a potential geopolitical game changer. To name just a few examples, we are witnessing the deterioration of democracy and fundamental freedoms in many parts of the world, increasing disinformation campaigns, as well as cyber-attacks and isolationism instead of multilateral cooperation. As the European Parliament, we should make clear that unprecedented global threats arising from the pandemic call for strong and coordinated measures.

I welcome that, in the months and weeks to come, all the committees for external policies in our Parliament want to focus even more on our global response. With today's debate, but also with upcoming hearings as well as the reports the respective committees are working on, hopefully we can highlight the importance of the foreign policy dimension for the fight against a global pandemic and we can send a strong signal of solidarity with our partners across the world.

**Tonino Picula**, *on behalf of the S&D Group.* – Mr President, the implications of COVID-19 on foreign affairs are multiple; from international relations and trade development to the future of the multilateral order in general. We have to take up full responsibility to lead the global fight against the pandemic that will be based on our core values and principles. Our priorities should be to assist the most vulnerable communities, promote access to the vaccine, support a ceasefire and keep medical equipment and food supply chains open for everybody. At the same time, we cannot set aside our interests. This is why the fight against disinformation has to be our priority. We welcome the new communication and expect it to boost our resilience. Finally, in a sincere multilateralist spirit of close cooperation with key global institutions such as the UN, the WHO and the G20, we must act to help our international partners dealing with the consequences

of this pandemic and lead the way towards sustainable development as a core principle for recovery.

**Malik Azmani**, *on behalf of the Renew Group*. – Mr President, at the start of its mandate, the European Commission announced its geopolitical ambition. Europe was to become a global player.

The Coronavirus is putting this ambition to the test. In the last few months, the virus has forced our world to become smaller, keeping us locked down in our houses. And yet, this virus has become a global challenge reaching all corners of the world. It has shown us how connected and interdependent we have become.

However, it seems it is idealistic to think we can globally unite to face this crisis. It is disheartening to see examples where countries have attempted to use COVID-19 to divide Europe and even to act against our interests through so-called Corona diplomacy, disinformation campaigns, and with the escalation of tensions in, for example, Libya and at the Chinese-Indian border. We have to realise that the world keeps turning fast.

It is vital Europe starts acting in a more assertive way to face the challenges ahead with a clear and unified voice in the global arena. This is the moment for the Commission to live up to its geopolitical ambition, leading the search for answers on finding the origins of the virus, leading the global community in the search for a vaccine that will need to be made available to all people and countries, and leading the way to protect European interests, together with our liberal democratic allies in the world.

In the absence of global leadership by the United States, the European Union has to fill this void. Therefore, I call on everyone here present to embrace this global opportunity and responsibility. The European Union can make a difference if it decides to take its seat at the table on the world stage with renewed determination.

**Marco Dreosto**, *a nome del gruppo ID*. – Signor Presidente, onorevoli colleghi, gentile Vicepresidente Borrell, è evidente come la crisi dovuta alla pandemia di Covid-19 stia evidentemente mutando gli equilibri geopolitici globali. In questo contesto, la Cina non si è certamente comportata da partner affidabile durante la crisi sanitaria e l'iniziale silenzio non può essere perdonato.

Noi ribadiamo con forza, come ha più volte richiesto il nostro segretario Matteo Salvini, la necessità di un'indagine internazionale per comprendere le cause e le origini del virus. Il regime comunista ha le sue colpe e l'Unione europea deve avere la forza di pretendere questa indagine.

Vede, le sembrerà stano sentirselo dire da qualcuno della Lega, ma lei, in qualità di Alto rappresentante, ha avuto più chiarezza nei confronti della Cina che, ahimè, il governo italiano. Troppe voci, specie provenienti dal Movimento 5 Stelle, incluso il ministro degli Esteri Luigi Di Maio, non hanno avuto la forza e il coraggio di condannare Pechino, rischiando di mettere l'Italia nell'orbita dei paesi vassalli della Cina.

Chiediamo con forza questa indagine. A breve si vedrà la differenza tra chi è libero e chi non lo è, tra chi sceglie la libertà e chi, invece, guarda al Partito comunista cinese come un modello da seguire.

**Reinhard Bütikofer**, *on behalf of the Verts/ALE Group*. – Mr President, Mr Borrell, colleagues, the fundamental crisis, which has captivated the globe is driven by the COVID-19 pandemic. But it's also characterised by two novel features.

It's the first international crisis, since decades, in which the United States withdraws from any possible international leadership role, while China has been at the centre of this crisis, more than ever before, and this is not for the better.

This situation reflects the ongoing continental drift in international relations. On the one hand, we have a hegemonic battle between two superpowers, on the other, international institutions are being weakened – in particular multilateral institutions – and undermined. Through the impact of the crisis, these tendencies are being accelerated.

For our EU this constitutes an imperative to step up to the plate and to shoulder our own international obligations more confidently.

We have a mixed record. We failed when we imposed import-export bans for PPEs. We did well when the Commission organised a donors' conference for financing vaccine research and we will lead a coalition at the WHO to require an inquiry into the origin and the spread of the pandemic.

But the challenges are many and they are huge. Battling for our values and our interests means finding allies and showing our opponents that we mean business.

And let me end by making a remark regarding Hong Kong. I welcome the recent statement by the G7.

Through our resolution, this EP will say that the EU will not just criticise. We want China to understand that reneging on international obligations doesn't come free of cost. This message should be shared with Chinese leaders at the EU summit on Monday.

**Witold Jan Waszczykowski**, *w imieniu grupy ECR*. – Panie Przewodniczący! Señor Borrell! 20 lat temu polski minister spraw zagranicznych wraz z amerykańską sekretarzą stanu zainicjowali w Warszawie Wspólnotę Demokracji – wielką koalicję demokracji światowych. Właśnie w dwudziestą rocznicę podjęcia tej inicjatywy polski prezydent Andrzej Duda został zaproszony do Białego Domu, jako pierwszy przywódca europejski odwiedzający Stany Zjednoczone po *lockdownie* spowodowanym pandemią. Prezydenci będą rozmawiać oczywiście o stosunkach bilateralnych, ale i o tym, jak odrodzić współpracę transatlantycką. Europa powinna współpracować na rzecz współpracy transatlantyckiej – nie dzielić wspólnoty, nie separować się od Stanów Zjednoczonych, nie wybierać między Stanami a Chinami. Razem wobec wirusa, kryzysu i wyzwań bezpieczeństwa. Apeluję zatem do Pana, Señor Borrell, i do Pana Europejskiej Służby Działań Zewnętrznych, aby przyłączył się Pan do wysiłków polskiego prezydenta na rzecz odrodzenia współpracy transatlantyckiej.

**Özlem Demirel**, *im Namen der GUE/NGL-Fraktion*. – Herr Präsident! Seit Monaten nun reden wir über Corona. Und diese Pandemie zeigt sehr deutlich, was für Fehler in dem ökonomischen und politischen System vorherrschen. Jahrzehntlang lautete das Dogma der EU: privat vor Staat. Auf der einen Seite hatten wir – allein im Zeitraum von 2011 bis 2018 – 63 Mal eine Aufforderung an Mitgliedstaaten gerichtet, Kürzungen und Privatisierungen im Gesundheitswesen vorzunehmen. Auf der anderen Seite besteht die Verpflichtung, im Rahmen von PESCO die Militärausgaben stetig zu steigern.

Herr Borrell, Millionen Europäerinnen und Europäer stehen vor großen sozialen Herausforderungen, verlieren ihren Arbeitsplatz oder Teile ihres Einkommens. Ausgerechnet jetzt wollen Sie im EU-Haushalt erstmalig über 25 Milliarden EUR für die Erforschung und Beschaffung von Kriegsgerät ausgeben – und das, obwohl Artikel 41 Absatz 2 das ausdrücklich verbietet.

Warum möchten Sie nicht verstehen, dass man Bomben und Panzer nicht essen kann und dass man damit auch keine Menschen gesund pflegen kann? Sie sagen: Wir brauchen *hard skills*. Die Zeit des naiven Europas ist vorbei. Ich sage: Naiv wäre zu glauben, dass diese Aufrüstungsspirale und diese aktualisierte geopolitische Ausrichtung mehr Frieden und Sicherheit bringen.

**Antoni Comín i Oliveres (NI)**. – Señor presidente, señor vicepresidente, la Unión Europea debe mostrar al mundo que es inaceptable utilizar la lucha contra la pandemia como una excusa para debilitar el Estado de Derecho. Ahora más que nunca, es necesario que la política exterior de la Unión esté presidida por sus valores fundacionales: la defensa de los derechos humanos y las libertades democráticas. Y es necesario que los representantes de la Unión ante el mundo puedan representar con credibilidad estos principios.

Esta semana hemos conocido unos documentos de la CIA de los años 80 donde se indica que el Gobierno español, presidido por Felipe González, acordó la formación de un grupo de mercenarios, los GAL, para combatir fuera de la ley el terrorismo. Dicho brevemente: terrorismo de Estado. Y en 1998 usted mostró públicamente su solidaridad con un ministro y un secretario de Estado pocos días después de que fueran condenados a cárcel por el caso.

*(El presidente interrumpe al orador).*

**Presidente**. – Por favor, peço ao orador que respeite os temas que estão na nossa ordem do dia porque, caso contrário, a intervenção subverte a ordem do dia que está estabelecida.

Quer concluir a sua intervenção, por favor?

**Antoni Comín i Oliveres (NI).** – Señor alto representante, con todo el respeto personal, pero con toda la exigencia ética y con toda la contundencia política, le pregunto: ¿ratifica usted su apoyo a los responsables del terrorismo de Estado? De su respuesta depende no solo su legitimidad para actuar como alto representante sino la credibilidad del conjunto de la Unión ante la comunidad internacional.

**Presidente.** – Recordo a todos os colegas que foi acordada uma ordem do dia com três temas para a nossa discussão e que, naturalmente, intervenções sobre temas que não constam da ordem do dia representam uma subversão da ordem do dia que está afixada. Portanto, peço que respeitem a agenda da nossa reunião.

**Michael Gahler (PPE).** – Herr Präsident! Die wirtschaftlichen Folgen der COVID-19-Krise bewirken eine weitere politische Destabilisierung von Staaten und ganzen Regionen, die sowieso schon von Krisen und Konflikten betroffen sind. Manche Akteure versuchen, ihre geplante Agenda im Schatten der Krise durchzuziehen, ohne große Aufmerksamkeit zu erregen. Dem sollten wir entgegenreten!

China muss daran erinnert werden, dass die Vereinbarung mit Großbritannien betreffend Hongkong eine völkerrechtlich verbindliche Vereinbarung ist – bei den Vereinten Nationen hinterlegt – und kein historisches Dokument.

Es ist gut, dass jetzt politische Repräsentanten aus Europa nach Israel reisen oder per Video den Dialog pflegen, um insbesondere dem Regierungschef deutlich zu machen, dass völkerrechtswidrige Annexionen auch unerwartete Konsequenzen vielfältiger Art von nah und fern nach sich ziehen können. Halten Sie sich da bitte zurück!

In Transformationsstaaten wie der Ukraine, Georgien und Moldau muss man all denen zurufen, die ihre eigenen oligarchischen Interessen im Schatten der Krise festigen wollen: Die EU steht bei den wahren Reformern und setzt mit ihnen die vereinbarte Kooperations- und Reformagenda um.

**Udo Bullmann (S&D).** – Herr Präsident, Herr Vizepräsident Borrell! Auch ohne Corona wäre dieses Jahr ein Jahr der schlimmsten menschlichen Katastrophen auf diesem Globus seit Jahrzehnten. Waren es noch vor wenigen Jahren 80 - Millionen Menschen, die vom unmittelbaren Hungertod bedroht waren, so wären es auch ohne Corona dieses Jahr 120-130 Millionen Menschen. Den Unterschied machen Umweltkatastrophen und militärische Konflikte.

Durch Corona wird sich diese Zahl verdoppeln: Mehr als 260 Millionen Menschen sind direkt betroffen von Hunger, von Massensterben. Es ist gut, dass wir sehr schnell Mittel mobilisiert haben, aber haben Sie eine Zahl, eine Größenordnung von kollektiver Anstrengung verfügbar, die nötig sein wird, um das Massensterben zu verhindern, damit wir wissen, worüber wir dieses Jahr reden? Können Sie uns einen Satz sagen zur Sanktionspolitik gegenüber dem Iran, gegenüber Venezuela?

Ich will nicht die ganze Bandbreite der politischen Diskussion aufmachen, aber ganz sicher ist es so, dass die Europäische Union alles tun muss, damit auch dort die Pandemie und der Hunger bekämpft werden können, egal was andere internationale Akteure darüber denken.

**Hannah Neumann (Verts/ALE).** – Mr President, Mr Borrell, dear colleagues, we have focused our efforts on the COVID-19 pandemic as a health crisis in recent months. But in its shadow a human rights crisis is unfolding and this human rights crisis is making the health emergency even worse.

If regimes attack and kidnap journalists who report on the pandemic, it doesn't stop the virus, it just spreads disinformation and mistrust.

If regimes use corona funds to buy weapons for their police to enforce lockdowns, it doesn't stop the virus. It only spreads fear and death.

Of course, restrictions to individual freedoms are necessary to fight the pandemic, but each and every restriction needs to be proportionate. It needs to be clearly linked to the health emergency and above all, people have to be allowed to debate them and often they are not.

So, to fight the COVID-19 crisis globally, we need to tackle both the health emergency and the human rights crisis. We need to monitor the spread of the disease and the human rights violations. We need to investigate deaths and human rights violations. We need to protect our doctors and our human rights defenders.



Mr Borrell, it's not just about millions. Team Europe needs to become Team Human Rights. And while I applaud your efforts in this regard, and you have spoken up strongly, I really think that we need to step up our actions on this one as well, looking at the world of today.

**Radosław Sikorski (PPE).** – Panie Przewodniczący! Po pierwsze chciałem podziękować przedmówcy, panu ministrowi Waszczykowskiemu, za to, że z aprobatą odniósł się do Wspólnoty Demokracji, ruchu zainicjowanego przez ministra Bronisława Geremka i kontynuowanego przeze mnie. Mam nadzieję, że to oznacza, że polski rząd przestanie też łamać praworządność i powróci do roli Polski jako przykładu demokracji do naśladowania przez innych.

A jeśli chodzi o pandemię, to uważam, że prawdziwe przetasowanie w hierarchii państw nastąpi w wyniku tego, jak poradzimy sobie z kryzysem finansowym i gospodarczym. Propozycje Komisji stwarzają wielką nadzieję, że poradzimy sobie lepiej i że Unia będzie bardziej spójna. Ale jednocześnie będzie kontynuowana polityka sztucznie niskich stóp procentowych, w wyniku której będą wzrastały nierówności w naszych krajach. Mamy więc wielką szansę, ale i też wielkie zagrożenie. I mam nadzieję, że pańska służba też będzie te sprawy monitorować.

**Kathleen Van Brempt (S&D).** – Mr President, I would like to say to Mr Borrell that, as you mentioned yourself, the impact of the COVID-19 crisis on the international stage isn't yet fully clear, but it will be huge. That's for sure.

Let me take the example of China because it's in front of us of course. Even before the pandemic, we had huge problems in our relationship with China. I am thinking about human rights, trade relations and the fact that it's a state-led economy, just to mention a few. During the COVID crisis these problems have only increased. They have bombarded Europe with fake news, they were not transparent on how to deal with the COVID crisis within their country, and there was of course the knowledge that we now have that we are too dependent on China, for instance for protective material when it comes to a health crisis.

So let's be very clear, Mr Borrell. Trade policy is the most important and the most powerful tool that we have within foreign policy and we need to bind them together, not just paying lip service to human rights and at the same time having normal trade relations with China. We need to fundamentally rethink how we look at China.

**Francisco José Millán Mon (PPE).** – Señor presidente, yo quiero destacar tres aspectos, brevemente, de la dimensión exterior de la COVID-19. Por un lado, la crisis ha puesto de relieve las deficiencias de la gobernanza global en materia sanitaria. Las instituciones internacionales no han sido capaces de asegurar eficazmente ni el intercambio de información ni la coordinación en la lucha contra el virus.

El segundo punto que quisiera subrayar es la exagerada dependencia europea del exterior. Debemos conseguir un elevado nivel de autonomía sanitaria. No podemos continuar dependiendo de terceros países en ámbitos estratégicos como la obtención de material sanitario o de ingredientes farmacéuticos activos para la fabricación de medicamentos. En la actualidad, baste con señalar que el 80 % de la producción mundial de estos ingredientes farmacéuticos se concentra en India y en China.

Por otra parte, está claro que debemos ayudar a los terceros países —en especial a nuestros vecinos africanos— en su lucha contra la crisis y, por ello, celebro que en la respuesta de la Unión se haya asignado una importante contribución financiera a la lucha contra la pandemia en terceros países.

Y termino. Desgraciadamente, en las dos últimas décadas se han sucedido los brotes de pandemias. Incomprensiblemente, esta última de la COVID-19 nos ha cogido por sorpresa, otra vez. Vivimos en un mundo globalizado e hiperconectado. Los virus no conocen fronteras. La próxima crisis sanitaria debemos afrontarla de forma más coordinada y eficaz.

**Javi López (S&D).** – Señor presidente, señor alto representante. Lo cierto es que la pandemia no solo ha significado el mayor reto sanitario y económico del último siglo para la humanidad, sino que ha subrayado las enormes debilidades y contradicciones de nuestro actual modelo de gobernanza internacional. Probablemente, tendencias que ya veíamos antes: una clamorosa falta de liderazgo global, organizaciones multilaterales muy debilitadas y una preocupante —y con enormes riesgos— tensión entre grandes poderes. Pero también Europa puede extraer unas cuantas lecciones sobre cómo actuar ahora en el exterior.

Necesitamos más que nunca que Europa se responsabilice de revitalizar y reformar las estructuras multilaterales porque para los retos globales como la pandemia, como el cambio climático, la desigualdad o poner normas a la globalización, es necesaria la cooperación; y la competencia no nos sirve para nada. Y Europa tiene que encontrar su camino autónomo, propio, como única forma para defender sus valores y sus intereses en el mundo.

Un momento también para buscar aliados y apoyarles en momentos como los actuales, como Latinoamérica, que ahora mismo está sufriendo gravemente las consecuencias de la pandemia.

**Александър Александров Йорданов (PPE).** – Г-н Председател, г-н Борел, нека да поздравим гражданите на Хонконг, които защитават своите права и свободи, потърпени от Парламента на Китай след приемането на репресивния закон за национална сигурност. Като представител на държава, която е преживяла ужаса на тоталитарното комунистическо управление, призовавам Комисията и Съвета, както и всички евродепутати, да се разделим с илюзията, че с комунистически Китай можем да изграждаме приятелски отношения.

Ние трябва да защитим категорично свободите на гражданите на Хонконг. Нашите ценности изискват да заявим ясно на режима в Пекин, че сме в състояние да прекратим инвестиционните сделки с него, да ограничим търговските си отношения и можем да реализираме политика на санкции спрямо негови функционери, така както го направихме след руската агресия срещу Украйна.

Санкциите са единственият мирен инструмент за вразумяване на оцелели в 21-ви век комунистически динозаври.

**Miriam Lexmann, on behalf of the PPE Group.** – Mr President, if one is not ready to speak for freedom everywhere, we cannot expect freedom to be granted anywhere. China continues to subvert Hong Kong's autonomy, rule of law and fundamental freedoms, as well as international agreements. The latest unilateral decision by the National People's Congress of China to enact a national security law for Hong Kong seriously threatens the city's autonomy, rule of law and fundamental freedoms. It is expected that the law will introduce a range of vague and draconian charges.

Two weeks ago, over 900 political leaders worldwide, including many of you, made a joint statement condemning this move. The joint motion for a resolution of this Parliament provides a clear and principled stance on the situation in Hong Kong and upholds the values on which this Union has been built, and which should and must direct our foreign policy, as stipulated in Article 21 of the Treaty. I therefore call on all Members to support this resolution and to stand with the people of Hong Kong.

**Isabel Santos, em nome do Grupo S&D.** – Senhor Presidente, desde a assinatura da Declaração Sino-Britânica para transferência de Hong Kong, muitos dos habitantes da região temiam o dia em que o Governo chinês ignorasse a lei básica e fizesse tábua rasa dos direitos fundamentais, como tem feito no Tibete, em Xinjiang e um pouco por toda a China.

Com a decisão de impor a lei de segurança nacional a Hong Kong, o Governo chinês abriu caminho ao desrespeito pelo Estado de Direito e pôs em causa o princípio de «um país, dois sistemas».

Os abusos do Governo chinês e o acentuar da repressão não podem ser tolerados. A importância da relação estratégica entre a União Europeia e a China não pode significar uma menor exigência de coerência entre a nossa ação e os nossos valores. Pelo contrário, impõe-nos a defesa exigente da liberdade, dos direitos humanos, da autonomia de Hong Kong e do Direito Internacional.

É isso que se espera da União Europeia.

**Hilde Vautmans, on behalf of the Renew Group.** – Mr President, it is very clear for me. I defend the 'one country, two systems' principle so I stand with the people of Hong Kong and support their freedom of expression. The arrest of four democratic leaders, the violent crackdown on protestors and the new security law are an assault on the autonomy of Hong Kong.

Luckily, this Parliament is united in a very strong resolution, asking China to withdraw the security law, to respect the freedom of people in Hong Kong and to show that it is willing to respect the rule of law. If not, we, the international community, should consider a case before the International Court of Justice and Magnitsky-style sanctions.

Mr Borrell, let me stress that, with almost 500 million consumers of Chinese products, we have the necessary economic leverage to make a change. I want Europe to engage with China. I want Europe to look for a new China strategy. But we have to do this by defending our values and our interests. That's why I plead again to China: withdraw the security law and give the people of Hong Kong the autonomy that has been agreed upon in the 'one country, two systems' agreement. Our group, Renew, stands for democracy values everywhere in the world.

**Mara Bizzotto**, *a nome del gruppo ID*. – Signor Presidente, onorevoli colleghi, la Cina comunista è l'impero del male del terzo millennio. La dittatura comunista cinese rappresenta la più grande minaccia alla nostra libertà e alla nostra democrazia. L'emergenza coronavirus, la guerra contro Hong Kong in violazione del diritto internazionale e le spie cinesi dentro le istituzioni europee sono fatti che lo dimostrano in maniera evidente.

È scandaloso che l'Europa e il governo italiano di PD e 5 Stelle siano complici silenziosi delle malefatte del regime cinese. Basta silenzi, basta doppi giochi, basta bugie! L'Europa deve pretendere la verità sui crimini commessi dalla Cina. La nostra vita e i nostri valori non sono in vendita in cambio di qualche affare sporco di sangue.

Cari colleghi, è chiaro che siamo di fronte a una guerra economica e a una guerra di civiltà che la dittatura cinese ha dichiarato contro il mondo occidentale. Noi siamo convintamente con l'Alleanza atlantica e dobbiamo essere pronti a difendere con ogni mezzo la nostra libertà e la nostra democrazia. Gli italiani, gli europei, gli uomini liberi di tutto il mondo non moriranno mai schiavi del regime comunista cinese.

**Assita Kanko**, *on behalf of the ECR Group*. – Mr President, this Commission has promised to be a geopolitical Commission. Yet, so far, I have not seen proof of this. Instead, I've seen the External Action Service bend over backwards to appease Beijing. At next week's EU-China summit, it's clear that the Chinese are unwilling to make progress on any major issues.

So, I ask the Commission, I'm asking you why are you giving Beijing a free photo op while they use all their energy to wage a global campaign against democracy? The people of Hong Kong were promised their own system of governance. China is reneging on its promises with the national security law.

If you are to truly defend democracy at home and abroad, we cannot just issue statements of support for Hong Kong democratic forces. We must back up our words with actions.

The EU is trying to chart its own strain of strategy. I do not subscribe to some of the Cold War rhetoric that we have seen from Washington. But, as Margaret Thatcher once said: 'The trouble with walking down the middle of the road is you get hit by traffic in both directions.' Where do you want to stand?

**Idoia Villanueva Ruiz**, *en nombre del Grupo GUE/NGL*. – Señor presidente, ayer hablamos en este Parlamento sobre la muerte de George Floyd. Necesario escuchar a la colega eurodiputada verde hablar sobre el acoso racista. Y hoy quiero recordar las veinte mil muertes en el Mediterráneo desde 2014, cincuenta y tres muertes y desapariciones hace apenas diez días.

Y es que la Unión Europea necesita hacer sus deberes respetando los derechos humanos en nuestro territorio y tener independencia para exigir responsabilidades por todos los George Floyd del mundo. Necesitamos reforzar las estructuras de gobernanza para poder tener una política exterior basada en el desarme, basada en las mediaciones, el fin de las sanciones, el multilateralismo, la lucha contra el cambio climático y la equidad de género.

En Hong Kong esto pasa por defender el derecho a manifestarse pacíficamente, como pedimos desde Chile a Palestina, desde Ecuador al Líbano. Fomentar el diálogo, respetar los términos del acuerdo sino-británico, pero también denunciar continuadas injerencias de Trump o el Gobierno británico.

Debemos apostar por una relación integral de la Unión Europea con China basada en la mutua cooperación, en la que se puedan debatir los acuerdos pero también las diferencias. Como en todos los lugares del mundo, necesitamos algo más que un acuerdo de libre comercio que deje los derechos humanos al margen.

**Carles Puigdemont i Casamajó (NI).** – Mr President, the EU's objective on Hong Kong is to make China respect Hong Kong. Respecting Hong Kong means respecting international law and particularly the right to self-determination. Making China respect Hong Kong will open the door for a greater respect of human rights in all the country and so will offer hope to people like the Uyghurs today victims of a tragic ethnic and religious persecution. If, on the contrary, the EU fails in this purpose, if the EU just makes grandstanding rhetoric and photoshop diplomacy, covering up the more unpleasant side of this great economic partner of ours, China, the discussion will be not on the concept of one country-two systems, but the EU will have shown yet again that it has one set of principles, two standards. Let me say that I don't trust much in this diplomacy that has shown its docility in confronting China's pressures but, Mr Josep Borrell, I'm ready to be surprised.

**Andrius Kubilius (PPE).** – Mr President, really, of course, we are condemning what Chinese authorities are doing against democracy and against Chinese international obligations in Hong Kong. We are standing together with the Hong Kong people in defence of their rights and their autonomy.

Of course, you should place strong pressure on Beijing next week, but we can see some paradoxes in the actions of the Chinese authorities. The attempts to destroy the democracy of Hong Kong brings clear evidence that they are afraid of that small island of democracy. Usually weak authorities are showing that they are afraid, and it reminds me of how the Soviet Union collapsed. The Soviet Union had weak authority and they were afraid of democracy. Chinese people are really clever people, and prudent people, and China deserves to be allowed into global leadership, but they need to learn now not to be afraid of democracy, and they need to learn democracy from Hong Kong and Taiwan.

**Mick Wallace (GUE/NGL).** – Mr President, the US Senate unanimously passed the Hong Kong Human Rights and Democracy Act last November, designed to protect US business interests. Sadly, the protest movement in Hong Kong has been hijacked by Washington-sponsored protesters who have turned justified anti-neoliberalism corruption protest into anti-China protests, fuelled by xenophobia and racism. The National Endowment for Democracy, an engine of US regime change machine, has recruited Hong Kong opposition leaders to orchestrate the protests and poured millions of dollars into them. Meanwhile in the US, they have a brutal far-right administration that lynches its black and brown people every day, brutalises protesters in the streets, imprisons, disenfranchises and pushes into forced labour more people than any country on earth. There are more black people in the American incarceration system today than there were slaves in 1850. This is the system that sings the praises of the violence of the Hong Kong protesters.

This is our third plenary debate on Hong Kong. When are we going to have one on Yemen? This Parliament needs to stop being a lapdog to a lawless US government.

**Antonio López-Istúriz White, en nombre del Grupo PPE.** – Señor presidente, me pregunto qué hacemos aquí o si este Parlamento tiene dotes de Nostradamus, porque estamos adelantando debates sobre una cuestión, en el caso de Israel, que todavía ni ha sucedido. No sé qué hacemos aquí hoy debatiendo sobre el tema de Israel. Sinceramente, me refiero, por supuesto, a que estamos aquí convocados por la ultrazquierda, los comunistas.

Quiero dar las gracias a gente muy razonable de la izquierda europea, en el Partido Socialista y en los Verdes, que ayer supieron diferenciar, en el tema de la aviación, las cuestiones políticas de las prácticas para esta Unión Europea. Gente razonable, como lo somos nosotros.

¿Por qué estamos debatiendo esto? Por la obsesión... Hay una compañera ahí de Izquierda Unida..., bueno, en fin, de los de Podemos, Idoia Villanueva, que hablaba de Chile. Chile hace años que no es una dictadura; sin embargo, Irán, Venezuela, Cuba son dictaduras.

Yo entiendo su obsesión por la democracia de Israel. Por favor, cambien de tono, cambien ya de discurso. Estamos defendiendo —como lo ha hecho el alto representante— que estamos hablando aquí de una cuestión que todavía no se tiene que debatir. Podemos debatir después, cuando suceda, sobre la supuesta anexión. No estamos aquí para debatir de las declaraciones electorales sino de hechos concretos, como haremos, alto representante, en el próximo futuro.

**Maria Arena, au nom du groupe S&D.** – Monsieur le Président, je suis un peu confuse parce que je viens de voir les résultats du vote d'hier concernant l'accord avec Israël sur les services aériens. Je suis confuse, dans la mesure où je me demande si notre institution est encore prête à défendre le multilatéralisme. En effet, j'entends beaucoup de mes collègues ici s'insurger contre certaines administrations, disant qu'elles bafouent le multilatéralisme, et par le vote que nous avons fait hier. 437 députés ne se sont même pas posé la question de savoir si nous respectons ou pas le multilatéralisme et les décisions du multilatéralisme.

Donc, ici, mon intervention n'est absolument pas en rapport avec la position vous prenez, Monsieur Borrell, parce que je pense que vous avez pris des décisions courageuses sur la question du conflit israélo-palestinien, mais je m'interroge vraiment sur notre institution et sur notre capacité à ne pas avoir un double langage et à ne pas avoir un double standard. On parle de la Chine, on parle de la Russie, mais quand il s'agit du conflit israélo-palestinien, il semble que nous soyons amputés d'une capacité de décider quelque chose qui est finalement décidé sur un plan international. Voilà ma confusion, Monsieur Borrell, désolée, mais je pense que la question nous revient à nous, en tant qu'assemblée parlementaire.

**Nathalie Loiseau**, *au nom du groupe Renew*. – Monsieur le Président, je voudrais aujourd'hui exprimer ici une vive inquiétude.

En effet, en vertu de l'accord de coalition qui l'a porté au pouvoir, le gouvernement israélien envisage de procéder à l'annexion d'une partie de la Cisjordanie occupée. Cette annexion serait illégale, elle serait dangereuse, elle serait le fruit empoisonné d'un rapport de force.

Or, pour nous ici en Europe, malgré tout ce qui nous divise, une certitude nous rassemble: cette certitude c'est que la force ne donne pas tous les droits. Ce qui nous rassemble, c'est la conviction que la force du droit doit toujours l'emporter sur le droit du plus fort. Je le dis avec beaucoup d'amitié pour Israël parce que l'amitié impose des devoirs. Je le dis parce que je place mes espoirs dans la sagesse de la démocratie israélienne. Je le dis, comme mon pays l'a fait quand il a vu les États-Unis se fourvoyer en 2003 en lançant une guerre en Irak pour de mauvaises raisons, une guerre qui a eu tant de conséquences négatives.

Le rôle d'un ami, ce n'est pas de se taire, c'est d'alerter celui qui risque de se fourvoyer. Nous tous ici en Europe, nous savons qu'on ne fait la paix qu'avec ses ennemis. Vous, en Israël, avez la force pour vous, alors servez-vous en pour la paix. Souvenez-vous de ce que disait Itzhak Rabin: seul un peuple fort peut faire la paix avec ses ennemis. Parce que vous êtes forts, soyez justes!

**Ernest Urtausun**, *en nombre del Grupo Verts/ALE*. – Señor presidente, evidentemente, la anexión anunciada por Israel de los territorios palestinos es una grave vulneración del Derecho internacional. Y, señor López-Istúriz, queremos discutirlo ahora, porque no queremos que ocurra. Queremos evitar que haya una vulneración del Derecho internacional. Ya sé que a usted quizá no le interesa demasiado proteger las normas internacionales, pero a una mayoría de esta Cámara, y a una mayoría de países de la Unión Europea, sí nos interesa proteger el Derecho internacional.

Por eso, es un error, creo, lo que se hizo ayer no posponiendo la votación del acuerdo de aviación con Israel, porque, al final, si dejamos que esto pase sin ningún tipo de consecuencia, ¿qué mensaje estamos mandando? ¿Qué tipo de defensa del multilateralismo estamos expresando como Unión Europea?

Y, también, creo que es un momento muy importante. Estábamos ahora hablando de la necesidad de que el peso y la voz de la Unión Europea se refuerzan ante la retirada de los Estados Unidos. Si hay un escenario en el cual la voz de la Unión Europea debe mostrarse fuerte ahora es ante las graves consecuencias que va a acarrear la decisión de Israel en Oriente Próximo.

Y, por ello, yo quiero celebrar que la diplomacia europea haya realizado comunicados, contundentes, diciendo que tal paso adelante no pasará sin ser contestado. Que habrá una reacción. Porque creo, evidentemente, que ahora es el momento de multiplicar los esfuerzos diplomáticos a todos los niveles para evitar que ello ocurra, pero si pasa, también Israel debe saber que esto no va a pasar sin consecuencias y que la relación tan intensa que tenemos con Israel va a tener que ser obviamente revisada.

Y, finalmente, creo que debemos también redoblar esfuerzos y apoyar acciones en el marco del Consejo de Seguridad de las Naciones Unidas para que cuando ocurra esta decisión -y parece que a partir del 1 de julio esto va a empezar a ocurrir- esa cuestión tampoco pase sin ser contestada en las Naciones Unidas.

**Paolo Borchia**, *a nome del gruppo ID*. – Signor Presidente, onorevoli colleghi, signor Alto rappresentante, io auspico che la Commissione e i colleghi si attengano ai fatti. Non c'è nessuna corsa alle armi, nessuna operazione militare decisa all'improvviso. Stiamo parlando di una proposta legislativa da sottoporre ai canonici passaggi parlamentari di uno Stato democratico. Quindi non posso che stupirmi per questi allarmismi, ma evidentemente qui a Bruxelles c'è chi si è già dimenticato di come funziona la democrazia tanto da proporre intromissioni negli affari interni degli Stati sovrani preparandosi a metterne sotto processo l'autorità decisionale.

Proprio per questo ricordo alle istituzioni che i protagonisti del processo di pace nel Medio Oriente dovrebbero essere lo Stato d'Israele e l'Autorità palestinese, mentre all'Unione europea spetta solamente un ruolo di supporto da esercitarsi nella massima neutralità. E questo perché l'ambizione senza strumenti diventa velleitaria. Alcuni analisti internazionali hanno già sentenziato che l'Unione europea, Turchia e Iran abbaieranno senza mordere.

**Bert-Jan Ruissen**, *namens de ECR-Fractie*. – Voorzitter, geachte heer Barnier, opnieuw worden hier door een aantal partijen de pijlen eenzijdig op Israël gericht, terwijl nog lang niet duidelijk is hoe de plannen van de nieuwe Israëlische regering er uitzien. Bovendien is de situatie veel complexer dan nu door een aantal collega's wordt voorgesteld.

Laten we niet vergeten dat het gaat het om gebieden die indertijd deel uitmaakten van het mandaatgebied Palestina – bedoeld voor de stichting van een nationaal Joods tehuis –, die vervolgens jarenlang werden bezet door Jordanië en die in 1967 in een defensieve oorlog onder Israëlisch militair toezicht zijn gekomen. En tot op de dag van vandaag zijn ze dat nog steeds. Alleen al daarom zijn grote woorden over annexatie en over schending van het internationale recht uiterst discutabel.

Iedere keer opnieuw maakt de EU de fout eenzijdig partij te kiezen, ook nu weer. Als we werkelijk een rol willen spelen in de oplossing van het Palestijns-Israëlische conflict moeten we deze eenzijdigheid laten varen, en wel zo snel mogelijk. Dit conflict vraagt om bemiddelaars, niet om betweters aan de zijlijn!

**Manu Pineda**, *en nombre del Grupo GUE/NGL*. – Señor presidente, señor Borrell, a principios de febrero usted declaró que la anexión de territorios palestinos por parte de Israel no podía pasar sin la oposición de la Unión Europea. Como sabe usted, antes de que se declarara la pandemia, estuve en Palestina como presidente de la delegación de este Parlamento y he de decirle que, pese a su clara oposición, ese plan se va aplicando paso a paso sin que tomemos ninguna medida que lo obstaculice.

La última decisión anunciada por Israel es la más grave hasta ahora. Hablamos de la anexión de importantes partes de Cisjordania: un tercio de Cisjordania, incluido el valle del Jordán. Una anexión que supone firmar el certificado de defunción de un proyecto que lleva décadas agonizando: la solución de los dos Estados. Claro, es imposible no preguntarse qué está haciendo la Unión Europea.

Como hemos dicho muchas veces, sus comunicados y declaraciones son impecables, pero el tiempo nos da la razón. Sus palabras no sirven de gran cosa si no se pasa a los hechos. Señor Borrell, algunas preguntas que me gustaría que me contestara son: ¿A qué espera la Unión Europea para reconocer al Estado palestino? ¿Por qué no se cancela ya el Acuerdo de Asociación, aplicando el artículo segundo? ¿Por qué no se impide la participación de Israel en todos los programas financiados por la Unión Europea? ¿Por qué no se impone un embargo armamentístico al régimen israelí? ¿Por qué no se prohíbe el comercio de productos de los asentamientos ilegales?

Señor Borrell, debemos tomar medidas para sustituir la ley del más fuerte por la ley de protección al más débil. El único imperio que debe existir es el imperio del Derecho internacional, la paz con dignidad y la justicia social.

**Evin Incir (S&D)**. – Herr talman! Herr Joseph Borrell! Kollegor i EPP undrar vad vi gör här i dag. Medan EPP verkar invänta en annektering och sedan vara reaktiva så föredrar vi i S&D att vara aktiva och förebygga en eventuell annektering. Tillåts Israel gå vidare med annekteringsplanerna så skulle det innebära ett stort slag mot fredsprocessen. Chanserna att återuppta förhandlingarna om tvåstatslösningen skulle vara helt omöjliga. Det skulle även underminera situationen och stärka grundern för polariseringen, extremismen och våldet i regionen.

En annektering innebär ett brott mot folkrätten, likväl som ett brott mot artikel 2 i EU:s och Israels associationsavtal. Men även om de stora annekteringsplanerna enligt Trumps plan inte blir av så sker det faktiskt en steg-för-steg-annektering i form av expanderingsplanerna i Palestina. Min fråga till er, herr vice ordförande och höga representant, är: Vilka steg avser du att ta mot Netanyahu's annekteringsplaner för att visa att vi är en union som står upp för de fundamentala rättigheterna i regionen, i vår union likväl som globalt?

**Josep Borrell Fontelles**, vicepresidente de la Comisión / alto representante de la Unión para Asuntos Exteriores y Política de Seguridad. —Cinco minutos es tiempo suficiente para contestar a 33 oradores. Ustedes comprenderán que mi respuesta no podrá ser todo lo suficientemente completa que yo hubiera deseado. Estoy encantado de participar en este debate, y quizá sería bueno que pudiese tener también la oportunidad de interactuar con ustedes en mis respuestas, voy a intentar hacerlo en la medida de lo posible.

Sobre Israel, la anexión, se han manifestado distintos puntos de vista. Alguien ha dicho que es discutible, que si es o no acorde con el Derecho internacional. Solo puedo decirles que hay veinticinco países de los veintisiete que creen que es contrario al Derecho internacional. Estarán equivocados todos ellos, pero es lo que creen. Veinticinco países de veintisiete han apoyado claramente una declaración en la que dicen que esto sería contrario al Derecho internacional.

¿Por qué estamos hablando de esto ahora? Porque estamos intentando evitar que ocurra.

¿Que no sabemos los planes del Gobierno de Israel? Ustedes perdonen. Sí, sí los sabemos. Claro que los sabemos. Son públicos y notorios, forman parte del acuerdo de coalición. Y a mí mismo me los han explicado en vivo y en directo ministros de ese gobierno. Y al ministro alemán, que ha ido a Israel, se lo han dicho directamente. O sea, que saberlo, lo sabemos. No hagamos la política del avestruz. No, no sabemos. Sí, sabemos.

¿Y qué estamos haciendo? Estamos haciendo lo posible para que diplomáticamente estas cosas no ocurran y no tengamos que hacer frente a una situación difícil.

¿Por qué la Unión Europea no reconoce al Estado palestino? Porque la Unión Europea no reconoce a nadie, no tiene capacidad para reconocer. Esto lo hacen los Estados miembros, y cada uno toma la decisión que le parece oportuna.

¿Qué medidas se van a tomar? Pues, veremos. No anticipemos. Aquí, sí; no anticipemos. Intentemos prever. Pero ciertamente, la posición mayoritaria, que no unánime —desgraciadamente, no puedo asegurar que sea unánime, porque no lo es—, es que esto sería contrario al Derecho internacional y que tendría que tener consecuencias, y estamos intentando evitar que ocurra.

En cuanto a Hong Kong y a China, no puedo estar más de acuerdo con ustedes sobre la necesidad de hacer todo lo que esté en nuestra mano para que se respeten los acuerdos internacionales que suscribió China y el sistema que pactó con el Reino Unido cuando este abandonó la colonia.

Lo hacemos por defender principios, pero también porque es en nuestro interés, y hay una intensa actividad al respecto.

Hay más cuestiones en nuestra relación con China, que vamos a tratar en la próxima cumbre. He intentado referirme a todas ellas, y ustedes también, pero concentrémonos en un aspecto muy importante que muchos de ustedes han señalado, que es que la crisis ha traído consigo —creo que han sido el señor Bütikofer y otros quienes lo han señalado muy acertadamente— una crisis del liderazgo americano —los Estados Unidos se han retirado claramente de cualquier intento de liderar la respuesta mundial a la pandemia—, una batalla hegemónica ente las dos grandes potencias y una debilidad de las instancias multinacionales. Este es el escenario en el que estamos.

Y creo sinceramente que Europa no puede dejar de ignorar este escenario y que tiene que tener una posición propia. En cuanto a la autonomía estratégica —tiene mucho que ver con lo que han señalado también muchos de ustedes sobre nuestra excesiva dependencia en el suministro de medicinas, y nos damos cuenta ahora de que nuestra dependencia es mucho mayor de lo que pensábamos y puede hacerse crítica en momentos críticos como este—, necesitamos reforzar esta autonomía estratégica y mantener nuestros valores y nuestros intereses de forma autónoma —y me he esforzado en explicar que eso no quiere decir equidistante, pero sí tener muy claro qué es lo que nosotros queremos, qué es lo que defendemos.

Porque, nos guste o no, desgraciadamente, no podemos estar de acuerdo siempre con los Estados Unidos, porque los Estados Unidos toman decisiones unilaterales que no compartimos. Y como no las compartimos, no podemos estar de su lado. Por ejemplo, no podemos estar de su lado en las decisiones que toman con respecto a la Corte Penal Internacional. Y aquí, espero que el Parlamento esté de acuerdo con esta afirmación. Y, en cambio, tenemos que preservar la unidad trasatlántica en lo que siempre sea posible, porque compartimos el mismo sistema político.

Por eso, a veces decimos que somos rivales sistémicos de China porque, ciertamente, no compartimos el mismo sistema político, pero esto no quiere decir que tengamos que estar rivalizando con China en todo y en todo momento. Porque hay cuestiones muy importantes en las que necesitamos una acción conjunta, en la medida en que se pueda acordar.

Creo, señorías, que estas son las respuestas.

Sí, carrera armamentística. No, nadie está pensando en que empujemos una carrera armamentística pero, desgraciadamente, hay conflictos a los que tenemos que hacer frente y, desgraciadamente, a esos conflictos hay que hacerles frente con armas.

La próxima vez que un grupo de terroristas asalte un poblado en Mali y mate a todos sus habitantes a punta de ametralladora, les mandaremos el texto de una Resolución para invitarles a que no lo sigan haciendo, pero yo creo que es mucho más eficiente que las fuerzas de esos países y las nuestras —que están desplegadas allí para combatir el terrorismo— tengan los medios necesarios para hacerlo.

**Presidente.** – Comunico que recebi seis propostas de resolução apresentadas em conformidade com o artigo 132.º, n.º 2, do Regimento.

O debate está encerrado.

A votação realizar-se-á na sexta-feira [19 de junho].

*Declarações escritas (artigo 171.º)*

**Joachim Stanisław Brudziński (ECR), na piśmie.** – Sytuacja wokół pandemii covid-19 dotyka całego świata i oczywistym jest fakt, iż Unia Europejska powinna być jak najbardziej zaangażowana zarówno w walkę ze skutkami działania wirusa obecnie, jak i przeciwdziałać jej negatywnym skutkom w przyszłości. Solidarność międzynarodowa wzywa nas do udzielenia wsparcia i pomocy tym krajom, które znajdują się w najtrudniejszej sytuacji, jak np. wiele krajów na kontynencie afrykańskim. Powinniśmy dołożyć wszelkich starań, by maksymalnie przeciwdziałać potęgowaniu napięcia na linii Chiny – Stany Zjednoczone. UE powinna w sposób zrównoważony współpracować z tymi strategicznymi partnerami. Obecna sytuacja tylko podkreśla, jak bardzo ta współpraca jest istotna. Mierzymy się przecież z wyzwaniami o charakterze globalnym! Polska daje przykład budowania jak najlepszej współpracy transatlantyckiej. Niebawem Prezydent Polski Andrzej Duda uda się do Waszyngtonu, jako pierwszy europejski przywódca, który został zaproszony do Białego Domu po lockdownie, by spotkać się z Prezydentem USA. Jest wiele wspólnych wyzwań i wiele tematów do omówienia. Budujmy i współpracujmy, zamiast potęgować antagonizmy i eskalować napięcia.

**Anna Fotyga (ECR), na piśmie.** – Sukces Hongkongu zbudowany jest na jego wolnościach. Obecne działania Komunistycznej Partii Chin stanowią największe zagrożenie dla mieszkańców autonomii od 1997 roku. Jesteśmy mocno zaniepokojeni próbami jednostronnego i arbitralnego narzucenia przez Pekin przepisów o bezpieczeństwie narodowym, co narusza art. 23 ustawy zasadniczej Hongkongu, a także łamie międzynarodowe zobowiązania Chin, między innymi w ramach notyfikowanej w ONZ umowy chińsko-brytyjskiej. Cieszę się, że udało się nam wynegocjować zdecydowany tekst, jasno opisujący nasze stanowisko wobec działań KPC. Jego przyjęcie da jasny sygnał, jak powinniśmy kształtować nasze stosunki z Pekinem, którego polityka już od wielu lat budzi moje zaniepokojenie. Ekspansja Pekinu wcale nie jest tak pokojowa, jak próbuje się przedstawić światu. W zeszłej kadencji szczegółowo omawialiśmy chińskie działania militarne na morzach południowo- i wschodniochińskim. Wciąż pamiętam spotkanie z córką İlhamą Tohtiego, ujęńskiego naukowca i dziennikarza skazanego przez władze chińskie na dożywotnie więzienie. Pekinowi jakiś czas temu udało się zdusić Tybet i systematycznie sięga po nowe cele. Musimy wspierać demokratyczny Tajwan, dbać o przestrzeganie prawa międzynarodowego. O tym jest dzisiejsza rezolucja, którą zdecydowanie popieram.

**Kinga Gál (PPE), írásban.** – A világjárvány számos problémát eredményezett már, saját és nyugat-balkáni partnerországaink gazdaságait is súlyosan károsítva. Ezek természetesen szűkítik mozgásterünket és segítségnyújtási kapacitásainkat, viszont alapvető, hogy válságok idején se engedjük el a partnerországaink kezét. Tartani kell bennük a reményt az uniós perspektíva életben tartásával, de anyagi segítséget is nyújtanunk kell nekik. Ezért fontos, hogy minél nagyobb segítséget kapjanak ebben az időszakban a nyugat-balkáni államok. Üdvözlöm a bővítési biztos által bejelentett jelentős támogatást a Nyugat-Balkánnak a koronavírus-világjárvány elleni küzdelemhez. A bővítési biztos által mozgósított segítség teljes összege 3,3 milliárd EUR, ebből 38 millió EUR azonnali támogatás az egészségügyi ágazatnak, 389 millió EUR-t szán a szociális és gazdasági helyreállításra, 750 millió EUR-t makroszintű pénzügyi támogatásra, 455 millió EUR-t a gazdaságélénkítésre, 1,7 milliárd EUR-t pedig az Európai Beruházási Bank által nyújtott kedvezményes kölcsönök formájában nyújt.



Lépéseinkkel megmutattuk, hogy a válság alatt és után is számíthatnak ránk nyugat-balkáni partnerországaink.

**György Hölvényi (PPE), írásban.** – A koronavírus járvány világszerte több, pontosan még nem felmérhető problémát fog eredményezni, egészségügyi, társadalmi és gazdasági téren is. Miközben a gazdasági visszaesés szűkíti a rendelkezésre álló forrásainkat, partnerországaink humanitárius és fejlesztési szükségletei is növekednek. Azért, hogy az európai válság valóban sikeresek lehessenek új megközelítést kell alkalmaznunk a fejlesztéspolitikában. A koronavírus járvány közvetlen humanitárius következményeinek kezelése mellett, figyelmet kell fordítanunk a járvány hosszabb távú, gazdasági és társadalmi hatásaira is.

El kell kerülnünk, hogy elhúzódó humanitárius válsággócok alakuljanak ki az olyan régiókban, mint Észak-Kelet Nigéria, Burkina Faso vagy Dél-Szudán, amelyek az Európába tartó migráció kiindulópontjai lehetnek. Ez csak akkor lehetséges, ha a humanitárius és fejlesztési támogatásokat valóban az arra rászorulókhöz juttatjuk el, hogy azokat az adott ország, régió és helyi közösségek valós szükségletei szerint hasznosítsák. A jelenlegi gazdasági helyzetben a rendelkezésre álló anyagi erőforrásokat az eddigieknél lényegesen hatékonyabb módon kell hasznosítanunk. Ezen az európai szerepvállalás hitelessége múlik. A hatékonyság fokozásához nagyban hozzájárul a fejlődő országok helyi közösségeivel folytatott közvetlen párbeszéd.

Ebben a munkában megbízható partnereink lehetnek azok a helyi egyházak, amelyeket sajnálatos módon az unió fejlesztéspolitikájában gyakran hátrányosan megkülönböztetés ér. Most, amikor az unió polgárai is támogatásra szorulnak, egyszerűen nem hagyhatjuk figyelmen kívül az egyházak által végzett fejlesztési és humanitárius tevékenységet és az ezek által jelentett tartalmakat.

**Michaela Šojdrová (PPE), írásban.** – Když byla britská kolonie Hongkong v roce 1997 předávána Číně, vše vypadlo, že se jedná pouze o formalitu. Pro obyvatele Hongkongu se nemělo nic změnit, a pokud ano, tak k lepšímu (byl zde dokonce závazek postupné demokratizace). Také Čína byla tehdy jiná. Na mezinárodním poli se chovala konstruktivně a doma pokračovala v tempu reform. Hongkongu byl přislíben trvalý status autonomie v duchu konceptu „jedna země, dva systémy“. Toto období je nyní pryč. Současné vedení Číny má jinou strategii – navenek projevuje větší asertivitu, dovnitř utahuje šrouby. Symbolický hřebíček do rakve autonomie Hongkongu přináší bezpečnostní zákon schválený letos v květnu ve stínu COVID-19 čínským parlamentem. Zákon má umožnit potlačování teroristických a separatistických aktivit, podvrtné činnosti i zahraničního vměšování. Kriminalizuje podkopávání autority Pekingu v Hongkongu, a zásadně tak narušuje hongkongskou autonomii. Je tak přímo namířen proti demonstracím a je reakcí na ně. Smutnou reakcí, která je zcela v duchu čínských metod a uvažování. Letos si obyvatele Hongkongu ještě svobodně připomněli události na náměstí Tchien-an-men v Pekingu z roku 1989. Otázkou je, jestli to bude příští rok ještě možné. Musíme se postavit za Hongkong a nehodit jeho obyvatele přes palubu. Je to součást univerzální boje za svobodu a lidská práva.

**Alexandr Vondra (ECR), írásban.** – Stát Izrael se v tomto Parlamentu těší neúměrnému zájmu; ne jako nejdemokratičtější země Blízkého východu, s ním sdílíme velkou část bezpečnostních zájmů a civilizačních hodnot; ne jako země, která v takřka každé oblasti lidského života dosahuje výjimečných výsledků a od níž se lze v lecčems přiučit; ne, s Izraelem se nejčastěji setkáváme jako s předmětem kritiky; kritiky, která je nesrovnatelná s jinými, třeba výrazně nedemokratickými režimy. Netýká se to jen tohoto Parlamentu, rezoluce z dílny OSN se častěji zabývají Izraelem než všemi ostatními státy na světě dohromady. Jsou snad všichni lepší? Nebo se jen vůči Izraeli uplatňuje výrazně tvrdší měřítko? Nemůže být pochyb o tom, že do přátelského vztahu patří i kritika; ne vždy je však vhodné kritizovat přítele, v jehož situaci se ani vzdáleně nenalézáme. EU by jistě měla komunikovat Izraeli své názory a třeba i pochybnosti; existují však jemnější diplomatické kanály než výhrůžné rezoluce, jak už opakovaně upozorňovali zástupci Rakouska a Maďarska. Trumpův plán není samospatitelný, představuje však jednu z možných cest ze slepé uličky, pro niž se palestinská samospráva sama opakovaně rozhodla v letech 1947, 1967, 1978, 2000, 2001, 2005, 2007, 2012 a 2015. Tendencí EU je bohužel vidět všechny izraelské třísky a žádné palestinské břevno.

**VORSITZ: NICOLA BEER***Vizepräsidentin***4. Pierwsza część głosowania**

**Die Präsidentin.** – Als nächster Punkt der Tagesordnung folgt die Abstimmung. Die Abstimmungsrunde ist von 10.30 Uhr bis 11.45 Uhrgeöffnet.

Es kommt dasselbe Abstimmungsverfahren zur Anwendung wie gestern. Alle Abstimmungen erfolgen namentlich. Die Mitglieder können ihre Stimmabgabe und die Ergebnisse der Abstimmung in dem Dokument einsehen, das auf der Webseite der Plenartagung veröffentlicht wird. Erklärungen zur Abstimmung können schriftlich eingereicht werden. Ausnahmsweise werden nur Erklärungen zur Abstimmung mit maximal 400 Wörtern akzeptiert.

Die Ergebnisse werden dann um 14.15 Uhr bekannt gegeben.

*(Abstimmungsergebnisse und sonstige Einzelheiten der Abstimmung: siehe Protokoll.)*

**5. Zwalczenie kampanii dezinformacyjnych w czasie pandemii Covid-19 i wpływ na wolność słowa (debata)**

**Die Präsidentin.** – Als nächster Punkt der Tagesordnung folgt die Aussprache über die Erklärungen des Rates und der Kommission zur Bekämpfung von Desinformation zu COVID-19 und zu den Auswirkungen auf das Recht auf freie Meinungsäußerung (2020/2635(RSP)).

Ich darf Sie kurz darauf hinweisen, dass in dieser Aussprache keine spontanen Wortmeldungen und keine blauen Karten akzeptiert werden.

**Nikolina Brnjac**, *President-in-Office of the Council.* – Madam President, the exceptional world health crisis we're still facing has been aggravated by an unprecedented 'infodemic'. Our citizens have been flooded by often false or inaccurate information, which not only creates confusion but is also putting health and lives at risk.

To address these risks the Council has strongly emphasised the need to intensify joint efforts in the fight against disinformation through close cooperation between EU institutions, Member States and social platforms. There is consensus in the Council about the need for more effective methods to address disinformation without hindering the protection of fundamental rights. Indeed, our strong and coordinated action against disinformation must be in line with our democratic values, including freedom of expression and free and plural media.

All institutions, Member States and civil society are called to act against the plague of the infodemic. Much has been done in the EU institutions, in cooperation with Member States. The External Action Service's StratCom Task Force and the rapid alert system, which was set up in the run-up to the European elections last year, track disinformation. We support and welcome these efforts.

A comprehensive approach at all levels is needed to address the challenges of disinformation. This must include monitoring and analysis of disinformation and manipulative interfaces, enforcement of European data protection rules, efforts to enhance pluralistic media, professional journalism and media literacy, as well as awareness among citizens.

EU institutions and Member States should continue working with social media platforms to achieve higher standards of responsibility, transparency and accountability on addressing disinformation. The whole society approach is also stressed by the recent Joint Communication 'Tackling COVID-19 disinformation – Getting the facts right', which takes stock of the measures taken in response to disinformation around the coronavirus pandemic and proposes further action.

The Presidency takes COVID-19 disinformation very seriously and we have taken steps to ensure close cooperation with Member State authorities, with EU institutions, bodies and agencies, and with international organisations such as the WHO. As early as 28 January, we activated the European Union's integrated political crisis response arrangements regarding the COVID-19 pandemic, bringing together relevant experts from the Member States and the EU institutions in the fields of health, consular affairs and civil protection.

In this framework, disinformation has been one of the topics we addressed. We believe that disinformation campaigns could also be highly disruptive in the respect of easing restrictive measures and of searching for a vaccine and a cure. We have also addressed the issue in other parliaments, such as in our Horizontal Working Party on Enhancing Resilience and Countering Hybrid Threats, in the Political and Security Committee and in the EU-US Justice and Home Affairs ministerial videoconference.

We are conscious that disinformation is here to stay and we all need to work together to maintain our vigilance, strengthen our toolbox and resilience, and continue our efforts to address this issue internally and beyond our EU borders. COVID-related disinformation is aggravating existing divisions in the eastern and southern neighbourhood and in the Western Balkans. At the Zagreb EU-Western Balkans summit on 6 May, the leaders of the EU and Western Balkans partners agreed to reinforce their cooperation in addressing disinformation and other hybrid activities.

As I said at the beginning, when fighting disinformation we must not forget the balance between the right of citizens to be properly informed and safeguarding the freedom of speech and the media. In the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, unprecedented circumstances led many Member States to adopt far-reaching measures which were key to acting rapidly and effectively protecting the health of the citizens.

Many of these measures had a significant impact on fundamental rights, democracy and the rule of law. It is therefore essential to make sure that they remain proportionate to the objective, limited in time and subject to regular scrutiny. The emergency measures taken to tackle the pandemic must not be used as a pretext to censor news and informal information coverage or to violate fundamental rights. It is critical that governments support the work of the independent media, which are crucial allies in the fight against COVID-19. The democratic debate, media freedom and the role of civil society deserves special attention. Upholding these values is a priority for the Council.

**Josep Borrell Fontelles**, *Vice-President of the Commission / High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy*. – Madam President, it's really evident that the virus pandemic has been accompanied by an 'infodemic', a pandemic of information. We have witnessed a wave of false and misleading information, and an exponential increase in targeted influence operations by foreign actors.

We have seen again that this information can do real damage. In the case of a pandemic, which affects the health of the people, it's even more dangerous. We have seen disinformation saying that drinking bleach can cure the coronavirus. I'm not making any specific reference to anyone, but this has been said – drink bleach and you will be safe – or that washing hands doesn't help. It can also spark crime. Take, for example, the vandalism against 5G infrastructure in some Member States, mainly in the Netherlands.

In March 2020, European leaders called on the Commission and the High Representative, through the External Action Service, to take action. Last week, we followed up with a joint communication on disinformation related to the pandemic. Together with my colleague and friend, the Vice-President in charge of Values, I will also comment on this communication. This communication summarises what the European Union has done to tackle disinformation in the crisis and how to step up action.

Disinformation knows no borders. Democracies and the West as such have been the target of disinformation, which underlines the importance of international cooperation.

Let me turn first to the external dimension. The infodemic has clearly been exploited by foreign state and non-state actors. Disinformation from Russian actors has spread conspiracy theories and orchestrated disinformation campaigns, targeting the EU and its Member States and neighbours by alleging a lack of solidarity and an internal crisis within the European Union, and sowing confusion.

China has also participated in that. Russian sources are old news, but China has been more active. China's sources have been promoting this image, presenting theirs as the better system, the best equipped to tackle the pandemic, and blaming democracy for its handling of the virus. One can imagine that doing self-praising propaganda is something that everybody does, but I think there are limits. It is one thing to explain that you believe yourself to be the best and another to deflect blame on the handling of the virus by others.

At the same time, there is a clear risk of governments using the infodemic as an excuse to limit fundamental rights and freedom of expression. Some Members referred to that in the previous debate. I think that the European Union needs to take a stand against this.

What has been done to address these worrying trends? We have been working to promote strategic communication and public diplomacy in our neighbourhood, especially in the Western Balkans. The External Action Service has stepped up its efforts to address foreign influence operations, publishing regular reports, analysing the trends in disinformation and sharing findings with Member States, our international partners, civil society and the media. The people working at the External Action Service are doing extraordinary and difficult work in this field.

We have made good use of the instruments we have at hand to tackle disinformation overall in the current crisis. We have mobilised the Rapid Alert System, which connects all relevant EU institutions and all EU Member States. This has been proving to be a valuable network. Since the outbreak of the pandemic, a dedicated space has been set up to exchange information on disinformation related to the virus. We have further increased our cooperation with our international partners – NATO and the G7 and its Rapid Response Mechanism – and we are also happy to be working with valuable partners such as the United Nations and the World Health Organisation.

Looking ahead, we will step up our actions by enhancing concrete preparation on strategic communication and public diplomacy, increasing the sharing of best practice in fighting disinformation, and activating more quickly the Rapid Alert System, intensifying the joint work with relevant partners from civil society and the private sector, stepping up the monitoring of violations of press freedom and supporting advocacy for a safer media environment. On this, we now have a specific programme, under the Instrument contributing to Stability and Peace, to support regional governments in tackling the crisis and to debunk disinformation that can further fuel tensions in conflict areas.

I could go into more detail, but I think it's now time to leave it to the Vice-President for Values and Transparency, Ms Věra Jourová, to continue on the important work with social media platforms and other aspects of this joint communication.

**Věra Jourová**, *Vice-President of the Commission*. – Madam President, honourable Members, we have just heard from Josep Borrell about the basic parameters and the information on what we call the 'infodemic' that is going on in parallel with the pandemic we are going through.

This is why we decided to prepare the communication and adopt the communication, which has the title 'Getting the Facts Right'. It was necessary because we needed to inform about what have been the steps taken up to now against disinformation because, in the COVID-19 context we didn't start from scratch fighting against disinformation. We already had the Code of Practice and we had the Action Plan, and its second purpose was to come up with a to-do list for all involved, especially the platforms, to step up their work.

In the communication we comprehensively address three things: the sources of disinformation, its channels and amplifiers, and also the targets.

Josep talked about the foreign sources of disinformation and I am glad about this because I believe that a geopolitical EU can only materialise if we are assertive, but we also have to put our own house in order. We need to beef up our strategy on communication. We have to get our story out about Europe and EU support during the coronavirus crisis, and it is high time we step up on this and do not allow others to occupy that space.

Now to the channels of communication and disinformation – especially the online platforms. I welcome the measures taken by them in this crisis; their strong commitment is heavily needed. I believe that the fact that we worked with the platforms, and we designed with them the code of practice on disinformation, helped to roll out new policies more quickly. We agreed with the platforms that they would promote links to the World Health Organization and health authorities and remove ads that offered fake medicines or inflate prices for normal products or give very dangerous advice, which we already heard from Joseph.

These actions brought results. For example, Google blocked or removed globally over 80 million coronavirus-related ads. But there is room for improvement and our code was just a first step. We need to ensure transparency and accountability. Citizens need to know how information is reaching them and where it comes from.

Our joint communication calls on the platforms to step up their efforts and to report monthly on their policies and actions to address COVID-19-related disinformation – not to report to the Commission, to report to the public, so that people can read about what's happening online.

The targets – well, it's about us, it's about the citizens of Europe. Lying is neither new nor that scary in itself. What scares me is that we believe in those lies too easily. This is why we need to become more resilient and critical as a society. We need to support free and independent media – the fact-checkers and researchers. And we have to step up our education. We will have the Digital Education Action Plan soon, adopted by the Commission, and there will be a very strong chapter on how to become more resilient and increase our critical thinking through education.

We will support fact-checking and research activities through the recently established European Digital Media Observatory. In this context, later this month, we will launch a EUR 9 million call for research hubs in the different Member States.

Also, we have to speak in this context about the freedom of speech, which remains our basic principle. Laws which define criminal penalties for spreading disinformation in too broad terms, and with disproportionate sanctions, can damage accountability mechanisms, which are just as important as ever. It can make the work of journalists more difficult, cause self-censorship and damage freedom of expression. This is not the European way. It is bad for democracies and it is self-defeating. Our best defence against disinformation are free and plural media, informed and active citizens and resilient democratic institutions in which they can trust.

I really want to insist on this because I believe this is a distinctive part of our policies. I do not want to create any Ministry of Truth. I used to live in a system, before 1989, with only one official truth, no pluralism of media, opinion, or even thought.

A competitive market of ideas enabled by free speech is essential in democracies. Just as in traditional competition policy where consumers benefit from fair competition and a level playing field, citizens benefit from fair competition of free speech.

To conclude, the communication is the first building block of this new Commission in response to disinformation. We are working on the Digital Services Act and the European Democracy Action Plan where we will address illegal content and harmful content like disinformation.

In this context, I really appreciate that we can work on this together with the committee which you established in Parliament, because I believe that common work can bring good fruit.

**Vladimír Bilčík**, *on behalf of the PPE Group*. – Madam President, the COVID-19 situation has only underscored that disinformation can kill people, just like it can kill democracy. We must therefore confront the spread of lies in our public space much more systematically. While I welcome the plans to step up EU efforts to counter disinformation, we need a tougher European action to fight off disinformation campaigns from Russia and China. We must speak with one, firm European voice against the actions by Russia and China, keen to undermine our European way of life.

But the fight against disinformation is not a narrow matter of foreign policy. We need robust action towards social media platforms that help spread disinformation. I welcome the Commission proposal that platforms report monthly on COVID-19 disinformation, but we need to think beyond the current crisis and take clear and, yes, legislative action that ensures that all social media platforms behave responsibly and report transparently on their fight against disinformation.

For the sake of the safety of our citizens, of all of us in Europe, we must protect facts from lies, science from hoaxes and journalists from facts and crooks, and we can only do this effectively together in the European Union.

**Kati Piri**, *on behalf of the S&D Group*. – Madam President, the spread of disinformation and fake news is a direct threat to our societies. It undermines our democracies, it harms our values and it affects our interests. But during a pandemic, as the Minister said, disinformation puts lives at risk. But not even deadly consequences have stopped foreign actors from spreading fake news. The amount of influence, operations and misleading campaigns, mainly from China and Russia, has been massive. Interference and hybrid warfare should never be a strategy, but especially not during a global health crisis.

The Commission's communication is another important step towards a solid, comprehensive and effective strategy against foreign interference. We need tougher regulations. The EU has been targeted with unprecedented actions. They require a firm and unprecedented response. The S&D Group is at the forefront of this fight. At our initiative, today we will vote on the establishment of a special committee against foreign interference and disinformation. Urgent action is the only way to protect our democracies, and the European Parliament is ready to play that role.

**Maite Pagazaurtundúa**, *en nombre del Grupo Renew*. – Señora presidenta, los días en que hubo más desinformación maliciosa coinciden con el momento en que las instituciones europeas o el Parlamento todavía no habían reaccionado de forma eficaz y contundente, o no con la máxima eficacia y contundencia, a la pandemia. Esa vulnerabilidad fue la que aprovecharon. ¿Por qué? Porque hay una estrategia de debilitar el Estado de Derecho democrático, nuestros sistemas democráticos, y los elementos de vulnerabilidad son aquellos por los que se introducen estas estrategias.

Se busca tener personas adictas a las mentiras, fanatizadas contra el que piensa distinto, actuando como nuevos soldados en el nuevo campo de batalla «en Internet». Y esos grupos fanatizados polarizan el espacio público, debilitan el pluralismo ideológico y, por tanto, debilitan nuestras democracias. Ese es el punto.

Por tanto, gritan más y atemorizan y nosotros tenemos que defender la libertad de expresión y un espacio de juego limpio y luchar contra la pandemia de fanatismo que puede llegar a socavar las democracias. Los soldados que hacen la desinformación no lo saben, pero los geoestrategas que quieren terminar con nuestros sistemas democráticos, sí. Y nos vamos a defender y, por supuesto, esto lo vamos a ganar.

**Filip De Man**, *namens de ID-Fractie*. – Voorzitter, wij bevinden ons op een gevaarlijk pad. Meer en meer overheden bedreigen een fundament van onze westerse democratie, de vrije meningsuiting. Ook de Europese commissarissen ageren natuurlijk: er kwam een “*Action Plan against Disinformation*”, een “*Strategic Communication Task Force*”, een “*Rapid Alert System*” en zelfs de privésector werd aangemaand om op te treden tegen de desinformatie.

Factcheckers moeten onze informatie bijspijkeren en ook hier geldt natuurlijk het spreekwoord: “wiens brood men eet, diens woord men spreekt” en wie dat niet gelooft, mag altijd de benoemingen van de factcheckers aan mij uitbesteden.

Nu dit alles, omdat de bevolking natuurlijk minder en minder aan het handje loopt van de traditionele partijen en de klassieke media, en het regime dus zijn greep op de geesten verliest. Ik zeg dus luidop: houdt op met die verdoken censuur! Leve de diversiteit van meningen!

**Sergey Lagodinsky**, *on behalf of the Verts/ALE Group*. – Madam President, it should be clear to us there will never be a silver bullet to solve all problems of disinformation. But hey, we are in politics, and we all know there is rarely a one-size-fits-all approach. But we should be clear about our starting point, and the starting point is to defend our democracy, not to damage it.

That's why our strategy should be threefold and should be holistic. First, fight geopolitical propaganda attacks from outside. Second, educate and inform press and internet consumers. And third, protect personal opinion and free speech.

The past weeks have demonstrated the pitfalls, but also the chances that we saw. There was a strong sense of direction from the European institutions, and I'm grateful to Mr Burrell for framing it right. It's not about just fake news, it's about a debate and a battle of narratives.

On the other hand, we saw how we can end up in an anti-democratic trap. This is why criminalisation of alleged misinformation about COVID, like in Hungary, attempted prevention of true press information in Poland, prosecution of pharmaceutical representatives in Bulgaria – just because they wanted to warn about a lack of drugs. This is all unacceptable.

We should not lose sight of our strategic principle. By confronting disinformation, we must defend democracy, not destroy it.

And one more point, because many people represent it here. Anonymity is an important good in the internet. Anonymity protects women, minorities, opposition voices in the internet, and that's why we should never abolish this there.

One more point on education and then I'm done. We should invest more in education, in justice and value systems and not cut this by 20% as is planned now in the MFF, and we should invest more as part of the recovery in civil society and education and not disregard it as is planned now. This is the way to go. This is the way to protect democracy.

**Jorge Buxadé Villalba**, *en nombre del Grupo ECR*. – Señora presidenta, señorías, la Unión Europea está experimentando una crisis de credibilidad sin precedentes. Desde la victoria del *Brexit* en 2016 algunos Estados miembros y las instituciones de la Unión han imputado su propia falta de credibilidad a campañas de desinformación por agentes externos o internos, pero olvidan que la desinformación no viene solo de ahí ni que, además, es algo nuevo.

La mentira siempre ha existido y, normalmente, ha venido del poder. Les quiero recordar que en las primeras páginas de la Biblia ya se cuenta cómo la serpiente engaña a Adán y Eva para expulsar al hombre del paraíso, desafiando a Dios. Pero, ¿hablamos de desinformación o hablamos de censura y de acabar con la libertad de expresión?

A mí me preocupa mucho que la Comisión convierta a esas empresas de verificación de datos en los sujetos que dicen lo que es verdad y lo que es mentira. Y me preocupa que, encima, reciban ayudas públicas, porque no son sino empresas privadas al servicio de sus propios intereses políticos o económicos.

La crisis del coronavirus nos ha enseñado que nadie es infalible. Y aquí todo el mundo ha desinformado, empezando por China, la Organización Mundial de la Salud, los propios gobiernos y los medios de comunicación. Creer que en este Parlamento se va a fabricar la verdad es un acto de soberbia inaceptable, como el de Adán y Eva.

**Eugen Tomac (PPE)**. – Doamnă președintă, domnule Înalt Reprezentant, doamnă vicepreședintă, este evident că în această perioadă, pe lângă criza generată de coronavirus, am avut parte de acest șoc numit pandemie informațională, șoc care trebuie spus exact așa cum s-a întâmplat pentru că adevărul nu trebuie ocolit în această situație.

Sediul acestor informații false este în Federația Rusă. Noi, cei din România, din țările baltice, din Polonia, știm că Rusia este specializată în a deforma realități, iar acest atac, domnule vicepreședinte Borrell, este un atac extrem de dur la adresa coeziunii europene.

Este bine ceea ce ați spus. Am constatat că există angajamente; este nevoie de acțiune. Federația Rusă trebuie să primească un răspuns pe măsura acestor dezinformări. Sunt mii de știri pe care Comisia le-a prezentat ca făcând parte din acest plan de dezinformare și noi trebuie să acționăm, inclusiv aici, în Parlament, printr-o rezoluție.

**Marina Kaljurand (S&D)**. – Madam President, I would also like to thank the Council and the Commission for their statements, and I will continue in Estonian.

Desinformatsioon ei ole uus nähtus ja ometigi oleme me iga kord üllatunud, kui järjekordne desinformatsioonilaine meid tabab, puudutagu see sekkumist demokraatlikesse valimistesse või rünnakuid üksikute liikmesriikide vastu. Mõõnan, et koroonakriisi ajal, mis on ülemaailmne kriis, jõudis valeinfo levitamise uuele tasemele, alustades informatsioonist koroonaviiruse päritolu ja leviku kohta ning lõpetades valeravimite ja šarlatanlike ravivõtetega. Ning see laine ei ole veel lõppenud ega lõpegi, kui meie ei lõpeta inimestest ja ei hakka tegutsema. Väidan, et on olemas ideed ja kogemus, aga puudu jääb otsustavusest ja kiirusest. Täna selgi arutelul kõlasid väga õiged mõtted – desinformatsiooniallikate paljastamine ja faktidel põhineva informatsiooni jagamine, koostöö liikmesriikide, institutsioonide ja meediaplatformidega, ajakirjanduse vastutus ja inimeste harimine. Ma tunnustan komisjoni ja välisteenistuse algatust, mis on seotud koroonaviirusega seotud desinformatsiooni vastase võitlusega. 'Tackling coronavirus desinformation, getting the facts right' – mul on hea meel, et see kasvas välja idasuunalise strateegilise kommunikatsiooni rakkerühmast, mille algatasid viis aastat tagasi Eesti, Leedu, Taani ja Suurbritannia. Ma kordan üle, et meil on teadmised ja kogemused, kuidas valein-

formatsiooniga võidelda. Aeg on otsustada ja tegutseda, see omakorda tähendab vahendeid – inimesi ja rahalisi vahendeid; ning oluline on ju informatsiooni kättesaadavus kõigis Euroopa Liidu ametlikes keeltes, mitte ainult mõnes väljavalitud keeles, nagu see kahjuks praegu on.

**Bart Groothuis (Renew).** – Madam President, I very much welcome the extra steps that the Commission has taken, but I also think they're somewhat cautious, preliminary, and I see them as first steps in a larger way that we can walk. I think there's much more to be done, and I think the Renew fraction is coming with new proposals in the next coming months. I think the proof of the pudding in countering disinformation is in the eating.

Now this week, a European NGO – EU DisinfoLab – actually meticulously disclosed a Russian state-sponsored disinformation operation inside Europe directed against Europe. So now, what do we do?

Just imagine, dear Commissioners, if we would put the centre of gravity of this information operation on the EU sanction list, it would deprive them of hosting providers providing them with websites, it would deprive them of financial services, it would freeze assets of the people behind the information operations, and it would also restrict travel.

So this is imposing costs on our adversaries. So if I look to the future of countering disinformation operations, I see it in this way. So please join us in the future, not just looking at the symptoms, but also at the root cause of it all.

**Jean-Lin Lacapelle (ID).** – Madame la Présidente, l'Union européenne n'a décidément pas de honte pour oser parler de la désinformation qui aurait existé de la part d'intérêts privés ou étrangers durant la pandémie. Elle a parmi les membres de son Conseil un expert en désinformation et contrevérités, en la personne d'Emmanuel Macron.

C'est lui qui méprisait notre groupe lorsque nous réclamions, sur la base du principe de précaution, la fermeture des frontières dès le 24 janvier. Son gouvernement nous répondait: «le virus n'a pas de passeport». C'est lui qui, afin de cacher la pénurie de masques en France, expliquait que le port des masques était inutile. Quel drame, quand on sait que nos aînés ont été abandonnés par manque de matériel de protection et que la première commande de masse enregistrée par le gouvernement français date seulement du 5 mars. Enfin, c'est par la voix de son ministre de la santé qu'il déclare que tester massivement n'est pas utile non plus, cachant la pénurie de tests.

Cela fait beaucoup de mensonges d'État de la part de ceux qui devraient être exemplaires. Des mensonges qui ont eu des conséquences dramatiques et pour lesquels il faudra rendre des comptes.

Donc, Mesdames et Messieurs les représentants du Conseil et de la Commission, épargnez-nous vos leçons de morale sur la désinformation quand vous-même, vous êtes un triste exemple.

**Jadwiga Wiśniewska (ECR).** – Pani Przewodnicząca! Szanowni Państwo! Dezinformacja oczywiście nie jest zjawiskiem nowym i nie rozpoczęła się przedwcześniej, przed pandemią. Ona istniała od dawna. Ale teraz, ze względu na zaawansowane technologie i dostępne metody, stała się rzeczywiście bardzo niebezpieczna. Dziś w Parlamencie dyskutujemy o dezinformacji, a to wczoraj Parlament Europejski odrzucił wniosek o uchylenie immunitetu Guy Verhofstadta. Czy to właśnie w ten sposób Parlament Europejski walczy z dezinformacją? Z wczorajszego wystąpienia naprawdę wynika, że można publicznie, nawet w Parlamencie Europejskim, siać kłamstwo i nienawiść. Wymieniony członek Parlamentu obraził tysiące Polaków w nasze święto narodowe, mówiąc że w Polsce tysiące faszystów i zwolenników supremacji białej rasy przemaszerowało trzysta kilometrów od obozu Auschwitz- Birkenau. Proszę Państwa, to jest dowód na to, że Parlament Europejski sam staje się źródłem dezinformacji i *fake newsów*. Z uwagi na to, że Polska ma bolesną historię, proszę wybaczyć moje emocje, jestem głęboko poruszona....

*(Przewodnicząca odebrała mówczyni głos)*

**Isabella Adinolfi (NI).** – Signora Presidente, onorevoli colleghi, le mascherine sono importanti solo per i malati e il personale sanitario, le mascherine servono a proteggere se stessi e gli altri, non esistono prove certe della trasmissione da persona a persona, rischio moderato, rischio elevato, malattia grave, sconsigliato limitare i viaggi e spostamenti, la trasmissione dai casi asintomatici è rara, sorvegliare gli asintomatici, e potrei continuare.



Quali di queste affermazioni possono essere etichettate come disinformazione? La fonte è sempre la stessa, è l'OMS. Durante questa pandemia gli organismi pubblicamente considerati come attendibili hanno detto tutto e il contrario di tutto. Oggi pensiamo alle *fake news* soltanto diffuse via web, ma possiamo riflettere anche sulla comunicazione cosiddetta ufficiale. È mancata una gestione centrale della crisi e si è cercato di demonizzare il mio paese che, con scelte coraggiose, ha lottato per primo in Europa contro il virus. Gravissimo!

Ho una proposta, signori Commissari: aiutiamo i cittadini ad avere strumenti per l'analisi critica delle fonti e salvaguardiamo l'accesso alle informazioni e alla libertà di espressione. Rendiamo progetti come *Media Literacy for all* dei programmi stabili, in modo da promuovere sempre l'alfabetizzazione mediatica e la cultura dell'informazione ..... (*la Presidente toglie la parola all'oratrice*)

**Brando Benifei (S&D).** – Signora Presidente, onorevoli colleghi, abbiamo visto in questi mesi un'azione continua di disinformazione riguardo alla questione dell'epidemia Covid, abbiamo visto circolare *fake news* di ogni tipo e abbiamo visto uno sforzo per mettere gli europei gli uni contro gli altri, mettere in ridicolo l'impegno dell'Europa.

Noi abbiamo finalmente un'occasione ora, con questo impegno del Parlamento europeo di lanciare una commissione speciale di lotta alla disinformazione e alle *fake news*. Verrà approvata in questi giorni per combattere chi vuole dividere gli europei, per interessi che sappiamo vengono da lontano. Abbiamo visto in questi mesi, in questi anni, inchieste giornalistiche e inchieste giudiziarie che hanno indagato la circolazione di denaro e il sostegno a un falso diritto, il falso diritto all'amplificazione a pagamento della propria propaganda. Noi abbiamo bisogno di difendere la libertà di espressione, ma difendere anche la libertà di conoscere le fonti e di difendere la nostra democrazia, un bene fragile che deve essere difeso da tutte le istituzioni.

**Magdalena Adamowicz (PPE).** – Pani Przewodnicząca! Dziękuję za głos. Dziękuję także pani wiceprzewodniczącej Jurowej za informacje o działaniach Komisji Europejskiej w tym zakresie.

Pandemia dezinformacji jest obecnie jednym z największych zagrożeń dla demokracji i istnienia Unii Europejskiej. Pandemia koronawirusa przypomniała, że rzetelna informacja może ocalić życie, a fake newsy i hejt mogą zabić.

Dziś za pomocą dezinformacji zdobywa się i utrzymuje władzę w wielu miejscach na świecie, także w Unii Europejskiej. Jesteśmy bezradnymi świadkami unieważnienia demokracji.

Moc internetu pokazuje siłę rażenia dezinformacji, która rozprzestrzenia się szybciej niż wirus. Musimy wspierać prawdziwą wolność słowa, ale pamiętać, że wolność słowa używana do dezinformacji jest antytezą wolności. Wybory oparte na fałszu nigdy nie będą demokratyczne.

Wolność nie może służyć do zniewolenia. Musimy być odporni na dezinformację. Musimy edukować, jak krytycznie analizować przekaz od najmłodszych lat. Remedium na dezinformację musi być zwiększenie niezależności i pluralizmu mediów, wsparcie dziennikarzy oraz ogólnego dostępu do rzetelnej informacji.

**Pascal Durand (Renew).** – Madame la Présidente, Monsieur le Haut Représentant, Madame la Vice-présidente, nous le savons tous, mieux vaut un mensonge simple qui rassure qu'une vérité compliquée qui dérange. Et c'est dans ce monde-là que nous vivons maintenant, avec effectivement des réseaux sociaux qui amplifient, qui permettent d'aller beaucoup plus vite sur cette désinformation, sur ces mensonges.

Il nous faut lutter effectivement contre ces pratiques, vous l'avez dit tous les deux et vous l'avez très bien dit. Vous l'avez dit, Madame Jurová, et nous le savons, vous venez d'un monde qui a été totalitaire, vous venez d'un monde où la censure a régenté la vie des gens. Nous ne devons pas tomber dans ce monde-là et c'est le premier écueil.

Mais j'attire votre attention et j'attire l'attention de la Commission sur un deuxième écueil: nous devons également faire attention. Ne soyons pas naïfs, nous savons que des puissances étrangères nous attaquent, nous savons aussi qu'elles ont des relais à l'intérieur de notre démocratie et que des démocraties illibérales sont en train de s'y développer et que des extrêmes portent également ces mensonges.

Donc, faisons attention à faire en sorte de ne pas tomber, d'un côté, dans la censure et de mettre les habits de nos adversaires, mais en même temps, ne faisons pas une confiance aveugle au marché. Nous avons vu, et je terminerai là-dessus, que pour les mêmes faits de désinformation, et vous l'avez visé, Google va interdire, Twitter va laisser mais expliquer et Facebook va totalement laisser la liberté au nom d'une liberté d'expression.

Donc, nous ne pouvons pas faire confiance non plus aux règles simples du marché. Nous régulerons et nous serons à vos côtés. Merci Monsieur le Haut Représentant, merci Madame la Vice-présidente.

**Georg Mayer (ID).** – Frau Präsidentin! „Ein Mensch sieht ein – und das ist wichtig: Nichts ist ganz falsch und nichts ganz richtig.“ Ein Zitat von Eugen Roth – das möchte ich Ihnen hier mal mitgeben.

Aber ein Zweites, was ich mitgeben möchte, ist ein ganz massiver Fall von Desinformation. Da darf ich bitten – wenn die Kommission und der Rat so engagiert sind –, dem auch nachzugehen. Bemerkenswert ist dieser Fall, weil es hier um eine Regierung eines Mitgliedstaats geht. Ganz konkret geht es um die österreichische Bundesregierung, wo zum Beispiel der Bundeskanzler zu Beginn dieser COVID-Krise in einer Ansprache gesagt hat: „Bald wird jeder von uns jemanden kennen, der an Corona gestorben ist.“ Das ist eine besondere Ansage eines Bundeskanzlers, der damit natürlich Angst verbreitet in der eigenen Bevölkerung.

Der zweite Fall ist der des Gesundheitsministers Anschöber – der sich als Gesundheitsminister dadurch qualifiziert, dass er Lehrer ist –, der den Menschen durch einen Erlass – das ist inzwischen der berühmte Oster-Erlass – mitgeteilt hat, sie dürften sich zur Osterzeit nicht in privaten Räumlichkeiten mit ihren Familien treffen.

Auch das ist nicht die Wahrheit. Das stand in diesem Erlass nicht drin, das hat dieser Erlass nicht hergegeben. Ich darf Sie also bitten, diesen beiden massiven Desinformationen in einem Mitgliedstaat nachzugehen und das zu verfolgen.

**Beata Kempa (ECR).** – Pani Przewodnicząca! Szanowni Państwo! Dezinformacja to jedna z najsilniejszych broni w nowoczesnym arsenale wojny asymetrycznej. To świetny sposób budowania napięcia wewnętrznego, chaosu, strachu w kraju przeciwnika. Fałszywe informacje żywią się niewiedzą, półprawdą, brakiem transparentności, odpowiedniego informowania. Istotny w tym wszystkim jest upadek prasy, prasy pisanej, ale też potęga mediów społecznościowych. Dlatego najlepszym sposobem walki z dezinformacją jest otwartość, sprawdzalność informacji i dobra współpraca – nasza dobra współpraca. Tyle na przykład prawd, półprawd, kłamstw, nieprawdziwych informacji, jakie padły na Polskę, na Węgry – które nigdy nie były sprawdzane, tylko powielane i powtarzane – to jest właśnie dezinformacja. A potem jej skutki są opłakane dla Unii Europejskiej, dla jej wizerunku. Konsultacje, jasne, sprawne informowanie wraz z mechanizmem sprawdzalności – to najważniejsze narzędzia walki z dezinformacją. I nie powinno to przede wszystkim ograniczać internetu.

**Javier Zarzalejos (PPE).** – Señora presidenta, una de las consecuencias de la revolución digital es que el papel mediador de los medios de comunicación como filtros independientes de la calidad de información se ha reducido extraordinariamente. La desinformación aparece en este vacío y es el vacío que tenemos que llenar, lo cual nos plantea la necesidad de reconsiderar la responsabilidad de las plataformas, la utilización de aquellas herramientas tecnológicas que, con todas las cautelas necesarias, pueden ayudar a la lucha contra las *fake news*; y, por supuesto, el *fact checking* en términos de transparencia y el papel que todos los usuarios debemos desempeñar.

Pero es importante también que miremos en nuestra casa porque es preciso un compromiso firme de los gobiernos con una información veraz, transparente y creíble. El alto representante ha mencionado algunas afirmaciones extravagantes y peligrosas sobre el poder desinfectante de la lejía. Inventarse informes de universidades americanas y maquillar las cifras de muertos, con desprecio de la realidad, es también un ejercicio de desinformación.

**Alessandra Basso (ID).** – Signora Presidente, onorevoli colleghi, la direzione intrapresa non convince. Si sostiene di non voler comprimere la libertà di espressione ma, allo stesso tempo, si vuole dare risalto ai professionisti dell'informazione e bloccare gli *account social* di chi diffonde *fake news*.

Sottolineo che i professionisti dell'informazione, spesso, sono poco più che organi di propaganda. Ricordiamo che in Italia hanno sostenuto la posizione del governo e di chi voleva sconfiggere il Covid a colpi di aperitivo, dando invece del razzista a chi chiedeva misure più rigide. Con la scusa della difesa della salute e della lotta alle *fake news* si vuole mettere il bavaglio a chi dice cose scomode. Chi vuole difendere la libertà di espressione le *fake news* le combatte con la verità e non con la censura.

**Željana Zovko (PPE).** – Madam President, for over four months we have been fighting an unprecedented pandemic that has changed our lives dramatically and forced us to adapt to a new normal. The virus has left a massive and devastating impact, but we have managed to stay united in solidarity.

However, the COVID pandemic is not the only battle we are fighting. We are witnessing an enormous wave of disinformation about the coronavirus, aims at portraying us as ineffective and divided in our response. The disinformation campaigns are particularly strong in the Western Balkans, where they aim at destabilising the region and turning public opinion against the European Union. Although the European Union provided an unparalleled support of EUR 3.3 billion to the Western Balkans during the crisis, the polls still show that a majority of citizens think that other regional powers provided more.

The best way to fight disinformation is with transparency, accountability and increased visibility. Therefore, I welcome the efforts of the East StratCom Task Force and the EU Rapid Alert System that fact check and share genuine information. But we, as representatives of European citizens, should also go the extra mile.

*(The President cut off the speaker)*

**Věra Jourová, Vice-President of the Commission.** – Madam President, honourable Members, thank you very much for this very interesting and important debate. I am sure this is not the last time we debate about the power of the internet, and for a very good reason, because we see the power of it every day. We see that the internet can serve as a fantastic tool to organise humanitarian aid, but also the internet can be the place where some humanitarian disaster and real fight and violence can be incited.

So I think that this is a very serious topic to discuss. We have only started, as I said before, because ahead of us is the work on the European Democracy Action Plan, where we will speak about a very serious issue: how to protect the elections against disinformation, how to stop something I call privatisation of public debate, because we see the phenomenon of the algorithms, which are used to sell products, but which are also used to sell politicians. We face the new factor of lying in the political debate, which has the potential to win elections. We will have to discuss all these very substantial but at the same time sensitive issues.

So I look very much forward to the discussion. I look very much forward to cooperation with the committee which you have established, and I'm sure that by the end of this year we will not only see how we are fulfilling the tasks from the communication we speak about today, because there is a to-do list, but also that we are able to come to a good common solution on the issues I mentioned before.

**Josep Borrell Fontelles, vicepresidente de la Comisión / alto representante de la Unión para Asuntos Exteriores y Política de Seguridad.** —Muchas gracias, por este debate, que, ciertamente, no ha agotado el tema.

Ha habido aportaciones muy importantes, interesantes. Alguna muy original, como la de remitir los orígenes de la desinformación a Adán y Eva. No se me había ocurrido pensar que Adán, en el fondo, fue víctima de la desinformación propagada por Eva, que no le advirtió de las consecuencias que tenía comerse la manzana. Bueno, sí, es posible que Eva fuera víctima de la desinformación.

Pero hoy, en nuestro mundo, hemos de reconocer algo que creo está en la base de nuestro debate. La democracia es un sistema que funciona en base a la información que tienen los ciudadanos. Los ciudadanos eligen. Y para elegir necesitan estar informados de las opciones que se les presentan y valorar la acción de los Gobiernos, y eso exige libertad de información, pluralidad de información y veracidad en la información.

Si los ciudadanos reciben información errónea, no pueden hacer buenas elecciones, porque es como un avión que tiene el sistema de navegación mal. Se acabará estrellando. Y, por eso, es tan importante que luchemos para conseguir que la información, entendida como un bien público, esté al alcance de los ciudadanos y estos tengan sistemas de comprobación que les permitan saber si alguien les está contando una milonga —en castizo, castellano castizo—, si alguien les está mintiendo.

Porque yo no creo —diga lo que diga el poeta austriaco en cuestión— que en todo hay una parte de verdad y una parte de mentira. Pues, no. Mire, hay cosas que claramente son ciertas y otras cosas que son claramente falsas. Que 2 y 2 son 4 en el sistema de base 10, eso no tiene nada de falso, es cierto cien por cien. Y hay cosas que son absolutamente falsas, lo diga quien lo diga.

Que haya elementos de opinión en algunas informaciones en los que uno puede estar a favor o en contra por razones de gusto, de opinión, de inclinación ideológica... cierto, claro. Si no, no habría debate político. Pero una cosa es la valoración propia de los hechos y otra cosa son los hechos. Y como ha dicho mi colega, no pretendemos crear el Ministerio de la Verdad. Ella ya tuvo uno en su país; yo también tuve uno, en España, cuando había un Ministerio de la Información.

No, no pretendemos crear el ministerio que controle lo que podemos conocer o no. Pretendemos ayudar a los ciudadanos a que sean capaces de distinguir la verdad de la mentira. Y eso es la base del sistema democrático. Si no somos capaces de hacer eso, nuestra democracia será profundamente imperfecta y acabará no siéndolo.

Y por eso, este trabajo, esta tarea, es algo que necesita el apoyo de las fuerzas democráticas de todo el arco parlamentario para conseguir que la democracia sobreviva.

**Nikolina Brnjac**, *President-in-Office of the Council*. – Madam President, honourable Members. This topic is a priority for our Presidency. It is our obligation to protect our citizens from disinformation, in full respect of fundamental rights such as the freedom of speech, the media and association.

Our common values and democratic institutions are keystones to the resilience of our societies to the challenges of the Covid-19 pandemic. We will continue working horizontally across sectors and across borders, learning from each other through the exchange of information and best practices.

We very much look forward to working with you, with the Commission and with the EEAS to fight this pandemic and protect our citizens from harmful disinformation.

Upcoming initiatives like the European Democracy Action Plan and the Digital Services Act will enable us to step up our collective efforts.

**Die Präsidentin**. – Die Aussprache ist geschlossen.

*Schriftliche Erklärungen (Artikel 171)*

**Anna-Michelle Asimakopoulou (PPE)**, *in writing*. – Commission Vice-President Věra Jourová finally ‘named and shamed’ China, along with Russia, this week in the communication on ‘Tackling COVID-19 disinformation’ for engaging in ‘targeted influence operations and disinformation campaigns around COVID-19 in the EU, its neighbourhood and globally, seeking to undermine democratic debate and exacerbate social polarisation, and improve their own image in the COVID-19 context’. It is our duty to protect Europe and its citizens. It is our duty to tell the truth and to reveal the sources that intentionally cloud it or twist it to serve their own interests. It is our duty to ensure that the truth shines through on all occasions. I do hope the Commission continues in this direction and exhibits the same determination in other contexts such as Turkey’s shameless disinformation campaign about the situation at the Greek-Turkish border, where refugees and migrants are being used as pawns in Turkey’s geopolitical chess game at Europe’s external borders, as European leaders had the chance to see with their own eyes. After all, an affront to the truth is an affront to European values. It is an affront to democracy itself and it cannot be tolerated.

**Sara Cerdas (S&D)**, *por escrito*. – Os últimos tempos foram marcados por um tema que não deixa ninguém indiferente: o COVID-19. O COVID-19 abalou o status quo. Além de profundas alterações, assistiu-se a um fenómeno que dificultou a atuação das autoridades de saúde. Uma infodemia, denunciada pelas OMS, definida por um excesso de informações, que tornaram difícil encontrar fontes idóneas e orientações fidedignas. O excesso de informação, muita dela não baseada em evidência científica, dificulta que fontes confiáveis sejam encontradas de forma rápida pela generalidade da população, pelos decisores políticos e por profissionais de saúde quando precisam. Este excesso de informação não científica e muitas vezes contraditória pode fazer com que as pessoas se sintam ansiosas, deprimidas, sobrecarregadas, emocionalmente exaustas e incapazes de entender e assimilar informações importantes. A desinformação, bem com a assimilação

de informação não validada pode levar a tomas de decisões errada ou enviesadas pela falta de evidência científica. Urge o desenvolvimento de um mecanismo que controle a qualidade e veracidade do que é publicado, de modo a garantir a maior evidência científica nos processos de tomada de decisão, mas também que a informação credível e validada pelo processo científico chegue a todos cidadãos.

**Caterina Chinnici (S&D)**, *per iscritto*. – Durante la pandemia di COVID-19 si è registrata una massiccia ondata di informazioni false o fuorvianti, diffuse soprattutto sul web, inclusi alcuni tentativi da parte di soggetti stranieri di influenzare i cittadini e i dibattiti pubblici nell'UE. Le campagne di disinformazione possono rappresentare un serio pericolo per i diritti fondamentali dei cittadini, dal diritto alla salute al diritto ad essere correttamente informati, e per la stessa democrazia e lo Stato di diritto: è quindi necessaria un'azione concreta da parte dell'Unione che la renda più forte e resiliente nell'affrontare la sfida della disinformazione. Numerose sono le complessità che questa sfida comporta: distinguere tra contenuti illegali e contenuti dannosi ma non illegali e calibrare le rispettive risposte; garantire un corretto bilanciamento tra la libertà di manifestazione del pensiero e il diritto ad una corretta informazione. Per affrontarle occorre investire nella comunicazione, per rendere i cittadini consapevoli e dotarli di pensiero critico e competenze digitali; sostenere l'indipendenza e la libertà dei media, necessarie a fornire ai cittadini informazioni verificabili e attendibili e, nel contesto della pandemia, a preservare la loro salute; assicurare trasparenza e responsabilità delle piattaforme digitali, il cui contributo è essenziale nella lotta contro le campagne di disinformazione.

**Laura Ferrara (NI)**, *per iscritto*. – Una "infodemia" che non ha precedenti, caratterizzata da un bombardamento di informazioni, spesso false, imprecise e fuorvianti, ha accompagnato l'evolversi della pandemia da COVID-19. L'eccessivo flusso informativo ha spesso creato un effetto di confusione, paura, e generato a volte comportamenti di massa inconsulti, come abbiamo visto con gli assalti a supermercati e a mezzi di trasporto. In questo contesto non sono mancati fenomeni di istigazione all'odio, frodi ai danni dei consumatori e criminalità informatica. La minaccia della disinformazione è emersa soprattutto attraverso il web, sui social network e sulle piattaforme di messaggistica personale, utilizzate in modo massiccio negli ultimi mesi per la condivisione veloce di notizie per la maggior parte non verificate. Esiste anche un chiaro rischio che l'«infodemia» e le misure adottate in periodi emergenziali possano essere funzionali a limitare i diritti fondamentali e la libertà di espressione. Pertanto bisogna affrontare le sfide della disinformazione su diversi livelli, dal monitoraggio e analisi dei flussi informativi alla stretta cooperazione tra le istituzioni e le piattaforme sociali, dalla protezione dei diritti fondamentali ad una maggiore consapevolezza dei cittadini, da un sistema di media liberi e plurali al rafforzamento di istituzioni democratiche in cui tutti possano riporre piena fiducia.

**Elżbieta Kruk (ECR)**, *na piśmie*. – Reakcja Unii Europejskiej na kryzys związany z koronawirusem pozostawia wiele do życzenia. Również w przestrzeni informacyjnej wokół pandemii pojawiły się dezinformacje oraz utrudniania dostępu do wiarygodnych informacji. Pokazuje to, jakie znaczenie dla walki z dezinformacją ma budowa odporności społeczeństwa na fałszywe narracje.

W tym kontekście warto nawiązać do polityki historycznej i dezinformacji w tym zakresie. Otóż w maju tego roku rosyjska Partia Rodina przedstawiła w Dumie Państwowej Federacji Rosyjskiej projekt ustawy unieważniającej rezolucję potępiającą Pakt Ribbentrop-Mołotow – „W sprawie politycznej i prawnej oceny sowiecko-niemieckiego traktatu o nieagresji z 1939 roku” – przyjętą 24 grudnia 1989 r. To nie pierwszy przejaw dążności Rosji do zrzucenia z siebie współodpowiedzialności za II wojnę światową. Jednym z elementów tej narracji jest obarczenie winą za wybuch II wojny światowej walczącej z Niemcami na wszystkich frontach Polski, która poniosła procentowo największe straty ludnościowe (na każdy tysiąc mieszkańców straciła 220 osób).

PE powinien pozostać zaangażowany w przeciwstawianie się rosyjskim próbom fałszowania europejskiej historii. Dlatego należy poprzeć inicjatywę litewskiej Europejskiej Rady Ministrów Rasy Juknevičienė mającą na celu utworzenie grupy roboczej ds. europejskiej pamięci historycznej. Celem prac grupy powinno być bronienie prawdy historycznej, kultywowanie pamięci historycznej nt. zbrodni reżimów totalitarnych w Europie, zarówno hitlerowskiego jak i komunistycznego.

**Eva Maydell (PPE)**, *in writing*. – The COVID-19 pandemic was accompanied by a global infodemic consisting of misleading health care information, conspiracy theories, consumer fraud, and targeted disinformation campaigns by countries like Russia and China. While disinformation campaigns are not a new phenomenon, this crisis has shown us that they are not only detrimental to democracy, but can be detrimental to people's health. I commend the Commission for outlining concrete action steps on this matter – we need bolder and tougher action against disinformation.

I would like to focus on the central role that online platforms and digitalisation play in response to disinformation. Online platforms have to do their part: promoting authoritative content from professionals, including tools and initiatives to inform their users of false content and continuing their cooperation with EU institutions and Member States. Digital skills – one of my main priorities – are key to empowering citizens and raising their awareness, information literacy, and critical thinking. When it comes to online platforms, we need to think beyond the current crisis and take legislative action that ensures their responsible behaviour in the future.

It is imperative that we continue to tackle disinformation and propaganda while simultaneously maintaining the utmost respect for freedom of expression and democratic norms.

**Dace Melbārde (ECR), rakstiski.** – Cīņai ar dezinformāciju ES un dalībvalstu līmenī īstenojama kompleksa pieeja, uz ko norādījusi arī Komisija. Dezinformācijas apkarošanai jābūt arī Eiropas ārpolitikas prioritāram mērķim. Lai pilnveidotu sabiedrības drošumspēju, jāveicina medijpratība un kritiskā domāšana. Medijpratībai jābūt daļai no skolu izglītības standartā. Vienlaicīgi sadarbībā ar medijiem un sabiedriskajām organizācijām būtiski strādāt ar visām sabiedrības grupām, īpašu uzmanību pievēršot senioriem. Uzskatu, ka medijpratībai piešķirama prioritāte topošajā Digitālās izglītības rīcības plānā. Mums jāstiprina redakcionāli neatkarīgi mediji un kvalitatīva žurnālistika. Pandēmija ir veicinājusi izpratni par medijiem kā daļu no kritiskās demokrātijas infrastruktūras, taču vienlaicīgi saasinājusi nozarē gadiem novērojamās tirgus nepilnības, ko īpaši asi izjūt mediji, kas darbojas mazos tirgos, tostarp vietējie un reģionālie. ES jāpalielina mediju nozarei pieejamais finansējums un jāatrisina sistēmiskie tiešsaistes platformu regulēšanas jautājumi. Digitālo pakalpojumu aktā lielajām interneta platformām – “vārtu turētājām”, kas spēlē arvien nozīmīgāku lomu informācijas ieguvē un aprītē – jāuzliek par pienākumu informācijas plūsmā piešķirt prioritāti kvalitatīvam mediju un žurnālistikas saturam. Aicinu dubultot programmas “Radošā Eiropa” budžetu un tajā būtiski palielināt ziņu medijiem paredzēto finansējumu. ES arī pēc iespējas ātrāk ir jāievieš digitālais nodoklis un ieņēmumi jānovirza mediju nozares atbalstam. Vienlaicīgi ceru, ka dalībvalstis efektīvi izmantos Atveseļošanas plānā paredzētos instrumentus, ziņu medijos kā vienā no visvairāk cietušajām ekosistēmām ieguldot pienācīgu finansējumu.

**Андрей Слабаков (ECR), в писмена форма.** – Уважаеми колеги, слушам вашите изказвания и се сещам за едно послание, което Матей приписва на Исус Христос: „И защо гледаш сламката в околото на брат си, а не обръщаш внимание на гредата в своето око?“ Колеги, кампаниите за дезинформация идващи от Русия и Китай, не са ново нещо. От години Европейският съюз обсъжда дали и какви мерки да предприеме, срещу кого, колко сериозни. Коронавирусът не променя нищо, просто е поредната криза, която се използва за политически капитал. Големият проблем обаче е уклонът на някои от вас към тоталитарни мерки в собствените ви държави. Сериозната заплаха не идва отвън, а отвътре, защото някои правителства решиха да манипулират информацията, до която имат достъп техните граждани. Уж демократи, а отменят закони за прозрачност и анулират сесии за парламентарен контрол. И не, не говоря за вашите „любими“ Унгария и Полша, където правителствата действат с пълната подкрепа на гражданите, а за Испания, Италия, Швеция. Колеги, вие защитавате левите правителства в тези държави и прикривате техните кампании за дезинформация, но ще си изпатите. Когато превърнете дезинформацията в държавна политика, собствените ви граждани ще ви сложат на място. Благодаря за вниманието.

## 6. Partnerstwo Wschodnie przed szczytem w czerwcu 2020 r. - Bałkany Zachodnie po szczycie w 2020 r. (krótka prezentacja)

**Die Präsidentin.** – Als nächster Punkt der Tagesordnung folgt die gemeinsame Aussprache über die kurzen Darstellungen

— des Berichts von Petras Auštrevičius über die Empfehlung des Europäischen Parlaments an den Rat, die Kommission und den Vizepräsidenten der Kommission und Hohen Vertreter der Union für Außen- und Sicherheitspolitik zur Östlichen Partnerschaft im Vorfeld des Gipfeltreffens im Juni 2020 (2019/2209(INI)) (A9-0112/2020) und

— des Berichts von Tonino Picula über die Empfehlung des Europäischen Parlaments an den Rat, die Kommission und den Vizepräsidenten der Kommission und Hohen Vertreter der Union für Außen- und Sicherheitspolitik zu den Ländern des westlichen Balkans im Anschluss an das Gipfeltreffen 2020 (2019/2210(INI)) (A9-0091/2020).

Ich weise erneut darauf hin, dass es in dieser Aussprache keine spontanen Wortmeldungen und keine blauen Karten gibt. Wir haben eine entsprechend verkürzte Debatte.

**Petras Auštrevičius**, *rapporteur*. – Madam President, I would like to thank the shadow rapporteurs and colleagues who constructively contributed to this report. The Eastern Partnership is about closer association between the European Union and six partner countries. The extent of these relations and positive results of the European Union's support and action in its immediate neighbourhood will determine the Union's odds of global leadership.

Leadership requires a strong commitment. Such commitment should be demonstrated by passing a historically justified and politically endorsed message to our partners that 'their European aspirations are recognised and that by working together we can achieve necessary reform progress'. It is only a matter of time.

Our motto for the next decade of the Eastern Partnership should be 'more for more' and lead towards gradual and differentiated integration. It should be conditioned on the application of European values and democratic principles.

I very much regret that Mr Borrell is leaving the Chamber, although Commissioner Várhelyi is here. I have a very personal message for him as well.

In the political area, our partners require continuous support and guidance in strengthening their democracies, ensuring the rule of law and fighting corruption. As in the economic field, we should gradually open access to the EU single market by creating a common economic area. Let us remind ourselves that European security is indivisible. We cannot look at it through the Eastern or Western dimensions. There is only one, European, dimension and it is time to act as such. The Eastern Partnership initiative is rightly called a success story and will remain such as long as we act together, united by a common vision and joint action, dialogue and partnership.

Commissioner Várhelyi, as you know from today's news from the prison in Belarus, the leader of the Christian Democratic Party has cut his veins in protest at violence and injustice. I request from you a strong message and reaction to this inhuman act.

**Tonino Picula**, *rapporteur*. – Madam President, I am pleased to speak here today about the future enlargement and its importance for the future of the European Union, but I want to thank shadow rapporteurs for their cooperation and dedication in our common endeavour.

The main message of this report is to once again provide strong support of the European Parliament in the continuation of the enlargement process as one of the European Union's more successful and strategic policies. Enlargement is our most effective foreign policy instrument contributing to extending the outreach of the Union's core values, fostering peace and prosperity, equality, rule of law and respect for human rights across Europe.

This report highlights what is often forgotten: the merit-based prospect of full EU membership for the Western Balkans countries is in the Union's own political security and economic interests, as well as it is in the interest of the countries seeking full membership.

For the first time after the accession of Croatia in 2013, enlargement policy is again on the political agenda of the institutions. We welcome a new enhanced methodology breakthrough with the council's approval to start negotiations with North Macedonia and Albania on the Zagreb Summit Declaration. Now we need the implementation of those decisions and proposals in concrete form and dates for starting accession negotiations.

We would like to see a faster pace of closing chapters for the countries already negotiating, following more efficient scrutiny and supervision of their progress. It goes without saying that ambitious enlargement policy requires an adequate budget. Therefore the Council should provide for sufficient budgetary means in support of the enlargement policy.

On the parliamentary role of cooperation, the European Parliament is committed to intensifying political and institutional support for reforms in the Western Balkan countries in the process of EU accession.

Lastly, enlargement is a necessary condition for the EU's credibility and influence in the region and beyond. We can only be successful globally if we are credible in our immediate neighbourhood.

**Olivér Várhelyi**, *Member of the Commission*. – Madam President, for our geopolitical Commission, full engagement with our neighbours is a top priority. These are not just words: we have translated them into action.

Let me start with the Western Balkans, a region at the heart of Europe and surrounded by our Member States. In the first six months of our mandate we have first, in February, proposed a revised enlargement methodology. The aim was to make the accession negotiations more credible, more predictable, more dynamic and guided by a stronger political steer. Second, and despite the COVID pandemic, in March the Council adopted a decision to open accession negotiations with North Macedonia and Albania, and I'm pleased that both these decisions have been confirmed by the European Council.

To support the region hit by the pandemic, in April, the Commission put forward an unparalleled financial package of EUR 3.3 billion, mobilised together with the European Investment Bank. In addition, we associated the Western Balkans to a number of initiatives normally reserved for our Member States only. In May, we had the Zagreb Summit, where EU leaders not only reiterated our strong solidarity with the region but also reaffirmed the region's European perspective and sent a message of enhanced engagement from the EU side.

The Commission was tasked to come forward with a substantial economic development and investment plan to accelerate the reforms and the catching-up of the region. Still this week, the Commission will propose the draft negotiating frameworks for Albania and North Macedonia to the Council, together with an update on the progress made. We look forward to the adoption and the first intergovernmental conferences soon.

Enlargement is merit-based. To progress on their EU path, the Western Balkan countries need to continue to deliver on the reforms. Further work is required on the rule of law, the fight against corruption and organised crime, as well as on fundamental freedoms and human rights. Fast and tangible results on reform mean moving faster in accession negotiations, as was underlined in the enhanced methodology. The Commission will look at the progress achieved in the annual package to be presented in the autumn.

Also in the autumn, we will come forward with an economic and investment plan for the Western Balkans to support the long-term economic recovery and to bring the region closer to the EU. The plan will reflect many areas identified in your report, such as connectivity (especially in transport and energy), green transition and digital transformation. This plan should bring growth and jobs to the region, also as part of our common recovery effort after the pandemic.

Let me now focus on the eastern neighbourhood. Let me thank this House for your overall support for the vision on the future of the Eastern Partnership that we have put forward with the joint communication adopted in March. Our commitment towards the Eastern Partnership and its future was emphasised at last week's Foreign Affairs Ministerial Conference, together with our partner countries. I am convinced that it will also be confirmed at the leaders meeting later this afternoon.

Our aim is to build, together with the partner countries, an ambitious, flexible and inclusive partnership that constitutes and continues to bring concrete results to the people. In this context, I am proud that the EU is delivering close to EUR 2.5 billion in support for our eastern partners in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic. In addition to grants, this includes very substantial macrofinancial assistance in loans on highly favourable terms to help the countries cover their immediate urgent financing needs and strengthen their macroeconomic stability. This package also helps to save jobs as part of the economic recovery in the region by providing liquidity to the whole of the economy and by direct financial support to the SMEs. This crisis has further underlined how important resilience is as the overarching framework for our relations, and it will be at the heart of the Eastern Partnership going forward.



Our March communication puts forward an ambitious vision for our future cooperation through five broad policy objectives. First, to work towards resilient economies with strengthened connectivity. Second, to support the development of accountable institutions, the rule of law and security. Third, to support the green transformation and work on environmental and climate resilience. Fourth, support the digital transformation; and fifth, to work together towards the development of resilient, fair and inclusive societies. As a next step, we will work on transforming the policy objectives into practice.

Together with the Member States, partner countries and others, we will shape the post 2020 deliverables, to be endorsed at the next summit in early 2021. We count on your continuous support and cooperation to ensure a strong partnership for the years to come.

Finally, to the rapporteur, Mr Auštrevičius, I will look into this issue you mentioned. This is new to me. I was not aware of it and, of course, we will come out and make public messaging appropriately about it.

**Die Präsidentin.** – Damit ist dieser Tagesordnungspunkt geschlossen.

Die Abstimmung über den Bericht von Herrn Auštrevičius findet am Freitag, 19. Juni 2020, statt.

Was den Bericht von Herrn Picula betrifft, findet die Abstimmung über die Änderungsanträge heute, 18. Juni 2020, und die Schlussabstimmung am Freitag, 19. Juni 2020, statt.

*(Die Sitzung wird um 11.43 Uhr unterbrochen.)*

*Schriftliche Erklärungen (Artikel 171)*

**Dominique Bilde (ID), par écrit.** – Alors que l'Union européenne se penche au chevet de l'Albanie ou du Kosovo, ouvrant les négociations avec l'une et envisageant l'exemption de visa pour l'autre, quel spectacle consternant que celui d'un Président kosovar éconduisant le représentant de l'Union et désignant Washington comme seul interlocuteur légitime pour les pourparlers avec la Serbie. Une preuve supplémentaire que l'Union européenne peine à convertir son soutien financier considérable, estimé à plusieurs milliards d'euros, en dividendes politiques, dans des Balkans devenus le terrain de jeu de toutes les grandes puissances mondiales — de la Chine, en passant par la Turquie. Signe des temps, ces pays candidats font d'ailleurs bien peu de cas des critères d'adhésion européens. Que dire par exemple de l'Albanie et de ses lois liberticides, faisant craindre à son propre Président qu'elle ne devienne la «Corée du Nord de l'Europe»? À l'évidence, ce énième élargissement est un marché de dupes, dont profiteront seulement quelques investisseurs à l'affût du moins-disant salarial, au mépris des intérêts des peuples.

**Andrea Bocskor (PPE), írásban.** – A keleti partnerség kiemelt fontossággal bír az EU szempontjából, ezért olyan ambiciózus üzeneteket kell közvetíteni, amelyek reális európai perspektívát jelentenek, és kölcsönös kötelezettségekkel járnak. A KP országainak reformfolyamatait illetően fontos az ösztönzés fenntartása, hogy minden ország a maga ambíciója alapján fűzhesse szorosra az Európai Unióval való kapcsolatát. Fontos a társult tagok törekvéseinek elismerése, ugyanakkor a Keleti Partnerség egységére kell törekedni, és arra, hogy a társulási megállapodás és a mélyreható és átfogó szabadkereskedelmi megállapodásból fakadó lehetőségeket teljes körűen kiaknázzák. Fontosnak tartom, hogy az EU és a keleti partnerség országai között létrejövő infrastruktúra-kiépítési terv részét képezze a határátkelők bővítése, hogy több új és korszerű határátkelő nyíljon az EU és szomszédai között.

Nagyobb hangsúlyt kell fektetnünk a fiatalokra, az egyes EU-s programokat még inkább ki kell terjeszteni a keleti partnerországokra, mint a már megvalósult Erasmus+ és a Kreatív Európa programokat, továbbá ösztönözni kell a Horizont Európa programban való részvételt is. Fel kell hívni a keleti partnerországok figyelmét, hogy a választási jogszabályaik módosítása során teremtsenek egyenlő lehetőségeket valamennyi etnikai és nemzeti kisebbség képviselőire, biztosítsák az anyanyelven való tájékoztatáshoz és véleménynyilvánításhoz való jogokat, lépjenek fel az etnikai és nyelvi alapú gyűlöletbeszéd és megkülönböztetés minden formája ellen, az etnikai és nemzeti kisebbségeket célzó állhírek és félretájékoztatás ellen.

**Urmas Paet (Renew)**, kirjalikult. – Idapartnerlus on ELi naabruspoliitika oluline osa ning selle eesmärk on saavutada poliitiline assotsieerumine, tagada edasine majanduslik integratsioon, edendada heaolu ja luua platvorm ühiste probleemide lahendamiseks, sealhulgas kestliku arengu ülesande täitmiseks. Oluline on anda Gruusiale, Ukrainale ja Moldovale kinnitus, et vaatamata ELi riike endid tabanud raskustele ei ole koostöö idapartnerlusriikidega tagaplaanile jäänud.

#### **PRESIDENZA DELL'ON. DAVID MARIA SASSOLI**

*Presidente*

### **7. Wznowienie posiedzenia**

*(La seduta è ripresa alle 14.17)*

### **8. Ogłoszenie wyników głosowania: patrz protokół**

### **9. Druga część głosowania**

**Presidente.** – Possiamo ora al secondo turno di votazioni.

Il turno di votazioni sarà aperto dalle 14.30 alle 15.45

Le votazioni si svolgeranno utilizzando la stessa procedura – ormai siamo tutti allenati – che abbiamo usato questa mattina.

Dichiaro aperto il secondo turno di votazioni. Ripeto che si può votare fino alle 15.45.

I risultati delle votazioni saranno comunicati alle 18.15.

Vi ringrazio della collaborazione.

*(La seduta è sospesa alle 14.23)*

#### **PRESIDENZA DELL'ON. FABIO MASSIMO CASTALDO**

*Vicepresidente*

### **10. Wznowienie posiedzenia**

*(La seduta è ripresa alle 14.34)*

### **11. Sytuacja w strefie Schengen w związku z pandemią COVID-19 (debata)**

**Presidente.** – L'ordine del giorno reca la discussione su:

— l'interrogazione con richiesta di risposta orale al Consiglio sulla situazione nello spazio Schengen in seguito alla pandemia di Covid-19, presentata da Juan Fernando López Aguilar, a nome della commissione per le libertà civili, la giustizia e gli affari interni (O-000037/2020 - B9-0010/20),

— l'interrogazione con richiesta di risposta orale alla Commissione sulla situazione nello spazio Schengen in seguito alla pandemia di Covid-19, presentata da Juan Fernando López Aguilar, a nome della commissione per le libertà civili, la giustizia e gli affari interni (O-000038/2020 - B9-0011/20).

**Juan Fernando López Aguilar**, *autor*. – Señor presidente, señora comisaria Johansson, como presidente de la Comisión de Libertades Civiles, Justicia y Asuntos de Interior, es un honor para mí sostener en este Pleno una pregunta oral a la Comisión sobre Schengen.

Debemos hablar de Schengen. Para empezar porque es su cumpleaños. El 14 de junio de 1985, en una pequeña ciudad de Luxemburgo, tuvo lugar un Acuerdo, luego proseguido por el Convenio de 1990 y sobre todo por la legislación europea sobre Schengen que ha adoptado este Parlamento Europeo y que está en vigor.

Pero debemos hablar de Schengen sobre todo porque no muestra buena salud. Porque Schengen está en juego, *Schengen is at stake*. Y esta es la cuestión. A los que trabajamos en las instituciones europeas a menudo nos cuesta explicar los «palabros europeos», pero Schengen no necesita explicación. Porque todo el mundo sabe que es el activo máspreciado de la experiencia europea. El activo que mejor distingue las ventajas de ser europeo. La construcción europea. Un espacio de libre circulación, sin fronteras interiores, sin restricciones y sin discriminación entre europeos, del que disfrutan ahora más de cuatrocientos millones de ciudadanos y ciudadanas de la Unión Europea.

Y resulta que el espacio Schengen está regulado por el Derecho europeo: un Código de Fronteras Schengen —*Schengen Borders Code*—, un Reglamento directamente vinculante para los Estados miembros e invocable por los tribunales en defensa de la ciudadanía europea.

Y prevé condiciones para el restablecimiento de fronteras interiores por razones de seguridad pública. Pero nos hemos encontrado con una situación sin precedentes: COVID-19. Y, por eso, la Resolución que sigue a esta pregunta oral se titula precisamente «*Schengen area following the Covid-19 outbreak*». ¿Qué pasa con Schengen después de la COVID-19? Porque los Estados miembros se han precipitado a adoptar medidas unilaterales no coordinadas ni comunicadas entre sí, de restablecimiento de fronteras interiores en la Unión, que han producido larguísimas colas en fronteras interiores de la Unión, han producido sobrecarga policial, han producido problemas en el suministro de bienes esenciales y también para los trabajadores temporeros —*seasonal workers*—, protegidos también por el Derecho europeo.

De todos estos problemas tenemos que hablar en esta pregunta oral y por eso le hemos planteado con claridad, en primer lugar, si considera que las medidas y las restricciones que se han interpuesto son respetuosas con el Código de Fronteras Schengen, que establece tres principios: confianza mutua, solidaridad, pero también la exigencia del respeto del Derecho. Y es cierto que la seguridad pública ha sido invocada más de una vez para el restablecimiento de fronteras interiores, sobre todo después de atentados terroristas. Lo hemos visto. Pero la salud pública no lo había sido nunca. Está contemplada en el Código de Fronteras Schengen para el restablecimiento de fronteras exteriores de la Unión, pero no para las interiores; por tanto, es una lección que tenemos que aprender.

La segunda, ¿cómo prevé *Schengen recovery*? Hablamos del *recovery plan*. ¿Cómo recuperar Schengen para que sea *fully operational* cuanto antes?

En tercer lugar, ¿cómo asegurar que los controles sean excepcionales, como quiere el Código de Fronteras Schengen, y en todo caso limitados en el tiempo, *time framed*, con estrictas restricciones temporales?

Y, en cuarto lugar, ¿qué medidas prácticas podemos adoptar para asegurar la coordinación y la responsabilidad, coordinadas, por supuesto, por la Comisión —guardiana de los Tratados y del Derecho europeo—, ante retos comunes.

Pido el voto favorable para la Resolución que resulte de esta pregunta oral agradeciendo, por supuesto, el trabajo del *Schengen Scrutiny Group*, representado aquí por su presidenta Tanja Fajon, pero recuerdo que, en primer lugar, el contenido de la Resolución es un mensaje a la Comisión para que en ningún caso tenga lugar la improvisación, ni la descoordinación, ni las decisiones, ni las medidas unilaterales; que no haya una dinámica o una espiral de acción-reacción de unos Estados contra otros, ni mucho menos *retaliations* —represalias—, basadas (*palabras inaudibles*) en la confianza mutua, en la solidaridad y en la coordinación y el respeto del Derecho. Estamos trabajando por la salud del espacio Schengen.

Y, por último, déjenme decir que soy consciente de que esta Cámara (*palabras inaudibles*) tiene enemigos dentro del Parlamento Europeo, como los tiene (*palabras inaudibles*), que aprovechan cualquier situación para (*palabras inaudibles*) el restablecimiento de las fronteras interiores de la Unión. Hay que señalar que la mayoría del Parlamento apostamos por el plan de recuperación de Schengen.

Decía que es imprescindible apostar por un plan de recuperación de Schengen para que recupere su salud basada en los principios de solidaridad, confianza mutua y no discriminación entre europeos en ningún caso.

Ayer debatimos aquí sobre el racismo. El lema era «*Black lives matter*». *Sure they do*, y esto me da pie para afirmar: «*Schengen matters, too*», «Schengen importa».

*Black lives matter. Sure they do. (continues in Spanish) Schengen matters too. (Spanish) European law matters. European law matters even in times of crisis, even throughout the crisis. It must leave European law even throughout the crisis and learn out of experience. I would even add: European law matters especially in times of crisis, especially in times of COVID. (Spanish) full recovery (Spanish)*

Eso es por lo que, después de esta pregunta oral, concluimos con una Resolución que apuesta por el pleno restablecimiento —*full recovery*— de Schengen, el pleno restablecimiento de su buena salud. El activo más preciado de la construcción europea *ever*.

**Nikolina Brnjac**, *President-in-Office of the Council*. – Mr President, over the last few months, the European Union has been faced with the most challenging crisis since its creation. In addition to a very heavy toll on human lives, the COVID-19 pandemic has jeopardised certain fundamental elements of the European project, such as the internal market and the freedom of movement. I believe you would all agree with me that throughout this most critical period the absolute priority has, understandably, been to slow down and eventually stop the very rapid spreading of the virus. To that effect, many Member States have been forced to take legislative and practical measures which had a significant impact on free movement. In this context, the reintroduction of internal border controls was considered indispensable, even by some Member States which before the COVID-19 pandemic had been highly sceptical towards the application of such measures.

According to the Schengen Border Code, the reintroduction and prolongation of temporary internal border controls as a last resort and in response to a serious threat to public health can take place at the discretion of the Member States. Their application is, of course, subject to the fulfilment of the conditions set out in the relevant provisions. Neither the Commission, as the guardian of the Treaties, nor any Member State, has signalled any issue related to compliance with these conditions. Furthermore, I would like to stress that since the outbreak of the pandemic all Member States have been working tirelessly, with the political steering of the Council and the coordinating support of the Commission, in order to mitigate the side-effects of the measures imposed on the free movement of their citizens.

A series of Commission communications have been implemented by the Member States by way of priority to ensure the free flow of essential goods such as food, medicine and personal protection items, as well as the transfer of key cross-border workers and the repatriation of EU citizens and residents. At the same time, Member States have applied, in a coordinated way, restrictions on any unnecessary travel towards the EU.

At the second stage, as the overall health situation has started to improve, Member States have started easing the measures and full restoration of free movement within the European Union. This phasing-out entails, in some cases, a gradual approach and the replacement of internal border controls with alternative measures such as police controls within the territory. At any rate, Member States, with the support of the Commission, are strongly committed to applying any measures still temporarily needed, in full compliance with the principles of proportionality and non-discrimination. Most Member States and Schengen associate countries lifted internal border controls and related travel restrictions by mid-June. The rest intend to follow suit by the end of the month.

We are aware that there are still many steps to be taken, especially regarding the coherent lifting of external border restrictions. The fact that the lifting of internal border control in a coordinated way has been set in motion without major problems provides ample evidence of the Member States' strong will for a fully-functioning Schengen area. I am hopeful that we can use this positive momentum, along with the possible proposals that we expect from the Commission regarding the legal framework for internal border controls, to launch a fruitful debate between the two co-legislators on this crucial subject, to safeguard the Schengen area. Any future amendments to the regime governing internal border control need to be stipulated in such a way as to provide credible answers to threats to public order, internal security and public health. They should ensure the strictly necessary and proportionate flexibility for Member States and leave no scope for any abuse in their application.

**Ylva Johansson**, *Member of the Commission*. – Mr President, Schengen is one of the major achievements and very much appreciated by our citizens, as was very rightly stressed by Mr Fernando López Aguilar, Chair of the Committee on Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs (LIBE).

I would also say that Schengen has passed not only a celebration of 35 years, but has also just passed a major test. At no time was Schengen more important than in the last few months. All Member States took drastic measures to protect our citizens from the virus. Most Schengen countries introduced temporary internal border controls in addition to other measures restricting free movement across the European Union. Altogether, these measures helped to save tens of thousands of lives but had serious consequences for freedom of movement and a large social and economic cost.

On 5 April this year, the President of the European Commission and the President of the European Council presented a joint European roadmap towards lifting COVID-19 containment measures. In line with the principles established in this roadmap, the Commission presented, on 13 May, a communication setting out a coordinated, balanced and phased approach for lifting travel restrictions and controls at the internal borders. In the second stage, this also looked ahead to the ending of restrictions on non-essential travel to the EU through the external borders.

Due to the improvement of the epidemiological situation, by this Monday most Member States had lifted internal border controls and restrictions, including post-travel quarantine requirements. The Commission has strongly encouraged the remaining Member States also to lift internal border controls and restrictions to free movement by air, land and water within the European Union at the same time. I expect that all internal border checks will have been lifted by the end of June before we start relaxing the external border restrictions. The Schengen rules provide Member States with a certain discretion to reintroduce border controls for two or six months at specific border sections or at all their internal borders. Member States should set up specific authorised border crossing points.

Through bilateral contacts with Ministers and my regular video conferences with all the Schengen Ministers, based on the work at technical level of the COVID-19 information group (Home Affairs), we could address many issues and solve many problems, also regarding the scope of reintroduced border controls. In this emergency related to COVID-19, the Commission is of the opinion that EU Member States and Schengen states complied with the requirements of the Schengen Borders Code.

Since 2015, six Schengen states have also reintroduced border controls under the Schengen Borders Code, following the recommendation of the Council, motivated by extraordinary irregular migration, secondary movements, the external border situation and terrorist threats. These controls have been prolonged and prolonged until the end of October / mid-November this year. The Commission consistently encouraged alternatives to border controls, which may assure similar results. This concerns police checks, which, as explained in the recommendation of 12 May 2017 on proportionate police checks, can also be carried out in the border area and as such can replace non-systematic border checks.

In 2017, the Commission also proposed an amendment to the Schengen governance rules with substantial reinforcement of procedural safeguards to ensure that the reintroduction of border controls is truly only a last-resort measure. As you know, the negotiations on these proposals are blocked, but recent experience with the use of border controls to address public health threats deserves further reflection.

The Commission is committed to lead a process of reflection about the legal and practical steps needed to improve our response and better prepare our societies for similar emergencies. In particular, we have to be able to provide, in the case of pandemics, a coherent EU response at the internal and external borders. Currently, the EU can only intervene in the case of serious persistent threats at external borders, putting the overall functioning of the Schengen area at risk. COVID shows the need for better anticipation and for simplified or standardised procedures to be followed under the pressure of events. Decisions on the temporary reintroduction of border controls should be subject to consultation, including, where appropriate, joint meetings between the Member State concerned and the Commission. As the experience of recent months has shown, this provision of the Schengen Borders Code is rarely used in an emergency situation.

The new pact on migration and asylum that I will present soon will be the occasion to launch a process to restore trust between Member States and return to a fully-functioning Schengen area. We will reflect on how to ensure coordination among the Member States during emergencies in the future and on the future of Schengen and how to make sure its legal framework and implementation are ready for new challenges.

**Paulo Rangel**, *em nome do Grupo PPE*. – Senhor Presidente, Schengen é, sem dúvida, um dos pilares da União Europeia. Considero talvez que até o adquirido mais importante da construção europeia e não há dúvida que ele foi posto em causa por esta pandemia, foi desafiado como nunca fora ao longo da nossa existência enquanto União.

Os Estados-Membros entraram em pânico e para protegerem os seus cidadãos reagiram compreensivelmente com o fecho unilateral e descoordenado de fronteiras.

Agora, temos de garantir que há um avanço para Schengen, uma recuperação de Schengen, feita com respeito pela ideia de coordenação e articulação e, por isso, quero dar os parabéns à Comissão e agradecer à Comissão o esforço que tem feito e que, infelizmente, devo dizer ao Conselho, os Estados-Membros nem sempre têm seguido para coordenar e articular a reposição do espaço Schengen em toda a União. Tem sido um esforço enorme que nem sempre tem sido acompanhado pelos Estados-Membros.

É isso que aqui o Parlamento apoia.

And now let me only stress one point – even to my President Lopez Aguilar – because it's not true that the Schengen Borders Code doesn't allow public health, because a serious threat to public policy includes public health in a pandemic and/or epidemic outbreak.

Public health for external borders is independent of any epidemic or pandemic, and so I think that it is totally legal to have this situation that we have.

**Tanja Fajon**, *v imenu skupine S&D*. – Predsedujoči, spoštovana komisarka. Najprej iskrena hvala za vse sodelovanje in sestanke v zadnjih tednih.

Vem, da se zavedate, kako pomembno je obnoviti schengen, saj brez obnove schengna, kolegi, ne bo obnove evropskega gospodarstva.

Smo v kritičnem trenutku. Schengen praznuje letos, ta teden, 35 let in še nikoli ni bil tako resno ogrožen, kot je danes.

V zdravstveni krizi se je izkazalo, ob izbruhu epidemije, da so se države odzvale zelo egoistično, da ni bilo harmonizacije, ni bilo usklajenega delovanja, da so po večini zaprle meje, da ni bilo pretoka ljudi, ljudje se niso mogli vrniti domov, ni bilo preskrbe z medicinsko opremo in zdravstvenim osebjem.

Nismo bili pripravljeni na takšno situacijo in v izogib temu potrebujemo jasna pravila. Sami ste omenili, schengen je že dolgo na resni preizkušnji. Že štiri leta šest držav uvaja notranje nadzore brez pravnih podlag in brez pravih argumentov. Te zapore mej, ta ravnanja vlad in ta ravnanja teh držav postavljajo pod vprašaj celotni schengen in celoten projekt evropskega povezovanja.

In sprašujem se, ali so bili ukrepi res utemeljeni. V Sloveniji, Nova Gorica, človek bi veliko lažje šel do Stare Gorice, italijanske Gorice, kot mogoče 100 km stran v Maribor. Vprašati se moramo tudi, ali so bili ukrepi sorazmerni in učinkoviti.

In zelo rada bi vas, kolegi, opozorila, ko govorimo o skupni migracijski in azilni politiki, če bomo povezovali to vprašanje z vprašanjem schengenskega delovanja in reforme, bomo izgubili projekt.

Oba svežnja zakonodaje, tako migracijska in azilna politika kot reforma schengna, oba svežnja zakonodaje sta bila v tej stavbi sprejeta in odgovornost je na strani držav Evropske unije.

**Dragoș Tudorache**, în numele grupului *Renew*. – Domnule președinte, doamnă comisară, doamnă ministă, în ședința trecută de plen l-am onorat pe Robert Schuman. Declarația sa vizionară anticipa o Europă care se va integra proiect cu proiect, zi de zi, pe bază de încredere reciprocă și de solidaritate.

Treizeci și cinci de ani mai târziu, cinci state membre făceau un astfel de pas mic, bazat pe încrederea că își pot lăsa frontierele în grija celorlalți. Mai adăugăm încă treizeci și cinci de ani și ajungem la ceea ce Schengen reprezintă astăzi: o libertate fundamentală a cetățenilor europeni, una pe care avem datoria să o apărăm și să o consolidăm.

Pandemia a pus la grea încercare spațiul Schengen. Am simțit cu toții gustul amar al unei Europe cu granițe și restricții. Lipsa de coordonare dintre statele membre, limbajul prea timid al Comisiei Europene și granițele închise i-au făcut pe cetățenii europeni să pună sub semnul întrebării întreaga noastră construcție. Nu ne putem permite să se întâmple acest lucru din nou.

Această criză ne-a expus multe vulnerabilități, dar ne-a și învățat multe despre noi înșine, ca cetățeni, ca societăți și ca Uniune. Am învățat că avem nevoie unii de ceilalți, că trebuie să ne susținem în momente dificile și că reziliența noastră, a Europei, depinde de reziliența tuturor. Am fost cu toții în afara spațiului Schengen pentru câteva luni și am înțeles cu toții ce înseamnă asta, ceea ce ne lasă cu o întrebare: cum rămâne cu cetățenii români și bulgari, pentru care a fi în afara Schengen este o realitate cotidiană care ține de treisprezece ani?

Suntem cu toții cetățeni europeni, iar România și Bulgaria merită un mesaj politic despre ce înseamnă Europa pentru toți. Fac apel la Președinția germană a Consiliului, care își va prelua mandatul în două săptămâni, să pună pe agenda Consiliului corectarea acestei anomalii politice.

**Annalisa Tardino**, a nome del gruppo *ID*. – Signor Presidente, onorevoli colleghi, per noi è essenziale ricordare che gli Stati membri mantengono la sovranità sulla gestione delle proprie frontiere, ma siamo stati tra i primi, sin dallo scoppio della pandemia, a chiedere restrizione di viaggi. Invece la Commissione, abbiamo qui oggi la Commissaria Johansson, ha criticato la reintroduzione dei controlli alle frontiere interne e ha cercato di ritardare le limitazioni alle frontiere esterne, chiudendole solo quando la diffusione della malattia era già fuori controllo in diversi paesi. Se ci avesse ascoltato, avremmo potuto ridurre drasticamente la diffusione della pandemia in Europa ed evitare l'invasione, soprattutto quella della Sicilia, derivante dall'aumento esponenziale degli sbarchi di clandestini, come se non fosse bastato accogliere i torturatori arrivati con la Rackete.

Ora speriamo, almeno, che riuscirete a dimostrare attenzioni per alcuni settori chiave dell'economia europea, come il turismo, i trasporti, i servizi di ospitalità, che hanno subito gravi danni e vanno incentivati. E su questo spiace notare nessuna parola da parte degli altri gruppi.

**Tineke Strik**, on behalf of the *Verts/ALE Group*. – Mr President, in March, Member States had to take, all of a sudden, a lot of measures in order to combat the spread of the COVID-19 virus. Among a lot of other measures, they closed their borders.

This reflex to protect citizens is completely understandable, but it does not fit in an area where we have freedom of movement, where we have fundamental rights and where we have the principle of non-discrimination.

As a result of the closing of the borders, EU nationals couldn't return to their homes, couldn't visit their family and couldn't go to their jobs if they were frontier workers.

We call upon the Member States, in new waves of viruses, to take real effective measures focusing more on health measures, and proportionate measures, and to make sure that they coordinate, especially in border regions.

Although the internal borders are largely open now, the external border is still closed, and there we still see asylum seekers having practical problems in getting access to protection and family members in reuniting with their families in the EU.

We call upon the Council and the Commission to really combat these violations.

**Nicola Procaccini**, *a nome del gruppo ECR*. – Signor Presidente, onorevoli colleghi, questa crisi ha reso evidente il dirottamento dell'idea di Europa concepita anni fa, l'assenza di un coordinamento scientifico nel fronteggiare l'emergenza sanitaria, l'assenza di solidarietà economica che vedremo meglio nei prossimi giorni, il capovolgimento del principio di Schengen di cui stiamo parlando oggi.

In modo disordinato è venuta meno la libertà di circolazione delle persone e delle merci in Europa, mentre si è preteso di aprire le porte dell'Europa nei confronti dell'immigrazione extraeuropea. Tre giorni fa abbiamo persino omaggiato, in commissione LIBE, una delle navi ONG che ha fatto sbarcare centinaia di migranti in Italia, mentre gli italiani in quei giorni morivano a centinaia ogni giorno. Tutto questo non è Europa. Mi dispiace, non so come si chiami, ma è altro.

**Clare Daly**, *on behalf of the GUE/NGL Group*. – Mr President, I think at this stage, for me, the Schengen acquis can be summed up as 'free movement is a cherished European value, except when it isn't', which is quite a lot, especially if you're a person of colour or someone who is black.

I think we have to start by acknowledging that Schengen has been at breaking point since 2015. Internal border controls, which are only ever supposed to be allowed on a temporary basis as a measure of last resort, are being thrown up by Member States as and when they like: reintroduced and prolonged 50 times since 2015. At this stage, totally illegal, but the Commission has not acted to sanction these states. Of course you haven't, when we're talking about countries like Germany in April this year extending border controls with Austria under the threat of migration. I don't know how the migrants are going to make it through the Croatian borderguards beating them back there to make it to Austria in the first place.

So in the context of the Commission failing to act, I'm really proud of the resolution that Parliament has on pushing back the attacks on Schengen. It's the result of collaboration between the groups. We need to defend free movement and I hope the resolution is passed.

**Mislav Kolakušić (NI)**. – Poštovani predsjedavajući, poštovani kolege, ravnopravnost, višejezičnost i zajedničke granice su jedan od temelja Europske unije.

Mi ne smijemo dopustiti da proglašena pandemija Covida-19 i dalje održava bizarnu situaciju u kojoj četiri države koje nisu članice Europske unije budu u schengenskom prostoru, dok četiri države: Rumunjska, Bugarska, Malta i Hrvatska, koje su zajedno već 50 godina u Europskoj uniji budu izvan tog prostora. Pozivam vas da učinimo svi sve što možemo da sve četiri države još ove godine uđu u schengenski prostor i da ne dopustimo zatvaranje granica kojima smo svjedočili u posljednje vrijeme, gdje su pojedine države stavljale i vršile graničnu kontrolu jer to je udarac na jedan od stupova Europske unije, a to su zajedničke granice, zajednički prostor i jedinstvo među svim građanima Europske unije.

**Ioan-Rareș Bogdan (PPE)**. – Domnule președinte, Excelențele voastre, primirea României în spațiul Schengen nu este un moft. Constat cu tristețe că aproape singura legătură a României cu spațiul Schengen este că furnizează muncitori sezonieri. Ei nu beneficiază de standardul de sănătate și siguranță din statul membru unde muncesc, dar asta vom dezbate imediat.

Este inadmisibilă blocarea intrării României în spațiul Schengen, deși îndeplinește criteriile tehnice de aderare încă din 2011. Totuși, este ținută la ușă, deși este un furnizor de euro-optimism. Dezbaterem azi despre un spațiu Schengen funcțional, dar refuzăm să îl consolidăm și asta deoarece state ca Olanda, în frunte cu premierul ei, se opun nejustificat de ani de zile intrării României în Schengen. Apropo, îl invit pe domnul Mark Rutte să verifice portul Rotterdam pe traficul de țigări și evaziunea fiscală.

România are un președinte și un guvern PPE, proeuropene, susținătoare în forță ale statului de drept. Mă întreb: de ce sunt pedepsiți în continuare românii, deși sunt cei mai proeuropeni din Uniunea Europeană?



**Birgit Sippel (S&D).** – Herr Präsident! 35 Jahre Schengen – eine unglaubliche Erfolgsgeschichte!

Und gerade das Handeln der Mitgliedstaaten unter Corona – mit vielen Grenzschließungen – hat wie unter einem Brennglas gezeigt: Schengen ist nicht selbstverständlich, aber es ist dringend notwendig. Die offenen Grenzen in Europa sind unverzichtbar beim Austausch von Waren, Dienstleistungen und medizinischen Hilfen, aber es geht um viel mehr. Der tägliche Gang über eine Grenze, Leben und Arbeiten oder Studieren in zwei Ländern, grenzüberschreitende Freizeitangebote, das tägliche Miteinander über Grenzen hinweg: Das ist der Baustein für Verständigung, trotz oder gerade wegen vieler Unterschiede.

Deshalb fordere ich Kommission und Rat – und natürlich auch die Mitgliedstaaten – dringend auf: Stärken und erweitern Sie den Schengen-Raum und lassen Sie uns Europa täglich gemeinsam leben!

**Fabienne Keller (Renew).** – Monsieur le Président, Madame la Commissaire, chère Ylva Johansson, au début de la crise de la COVID, à la mi-mars, l'Europe s'est fragmentée. La plupart des États membres ont réinstallé des contrôles aux frontières. Ainsi, des milliers de citoyens, des travailleurs frontaliers, des familles ont été bloqués, séparés. Je l'ai constaté en tant qu'habitante d'une ville à la frontière: Strasbourg.

Nous devons tirer tous les enseignements de ces événements inédits. Je propose d'organiser avant cet été un RETEX, comme disent les militaires, c'est-à-dire un retour d'expérience pour analyser ce qui s'est passé, voir ce qu'on aurait pu mieux faire. Nous devons, en effet, apporter des réponses opérationnelles. Je plaide, comme beaucoup de mes collègues, pour un mécanisme plus intégré de gestion de nos frontières.

Je vous propose ainsi de nous tenir prêts pour faire face à toute nouvelle menace sur la libre circulation, notamment en cas de rebond de l'épidémie. Comme l'a rappelé le président López Aguilar, la libre circulation, c'est un facteur clé pour la relance de l'économie et de l'emploi.

**Erik Marquardt (Verts/ALE).** – Herr Präsident! Es sind ja schwere Zeiten, in denen wir gerade leben, und vielleicht ist es besonders in diesen schweren Zeiten ganz wichtig, sich noch mal klarzumachen, welches Glück es eigentlich ist, dass wir in diesem Europa in diesen Zeiten leben können.

Stellen wir uns mal vor, wir wären vor 100 Jahren geboren worden: Der Erste Weltkrieg wäre gerade erst zwei Jahre vorbei, die Spanische Grippe hätte 50 Millionen Tote verursacht, unsere Kindheit wäre von der Weltwirtschaftskrise geprägt gewesen, und wenn wir 13 sind, kommen in Deutschland die Nazis an die Macht. Bis wir 25 sind, haben die Nazis Deutschland und die ganze Welt an den Abgrund geführt. Wenn man so alt wäre wie ich jetzt, 32, wären es noch neun Jahre gewesen, bis die Berliner Mauer gebaut wird und ein Eiserner Vorhang Europa durchtrennt.

Ich glaube, dass wir dieses Glück, eben nicht vor 100 Jahren geboren zu sein, auch in eine Verantwortung übertragen sollten, besonders in solchen Krisenzeiten, besonders bei einem solchen Virus, wo wir sagen: Wir machen uns bewusst, was wir erreicht haben, was für Errungenschaften wir haben, und wir wollen jetzt gezielt effektive Maßnahmen finden, um dem Virus zu schaden, nicht mehr so dem europäischen Projekt, wie es leider in dieser Krise passiert ist.

**Ангел Джамбазки (ECR).** – Г-н Председател, г-жо Комисар, веднага държа да поправа тези от вас, които твърдяха, че националните правителства са били сгрешили в реакцията си. Не, уважаеми, сгреша Европейската комисия. По точно Европейската комисия се провали по темата „охрана на границите“. С напълно неадекватното си, абсолютно необяснимо поведение принуди националните правителства да вземат необходимите мерки и да затварят вътрешните граници една след друга.

Една голяма част от вас така и не разбраха, че за да има отворени вътрешни граници, трябва да има строго охранявани външни граници. Няма как да защитавате двете тези едновременно, няма как да искате стотици хиляди нелегални имигранти да идват тук необезпокоявани и да имате сигурни вътрешни граници. Това не може да се случи, това е утопия и ви го доказа и ситуацията с паниката и истерията покрай тази криза.

Още повече не може да не се спомене и абсолютно безотговорното поведение на правителствата на Холандия или сега Нидерландия, на Германия, които с вътрешните си проблеми държат Румъния, държат България, държат Хърватска, държат Малта извън шенгенското пространство. Тава е лицемерие и двоен стандарт и трябва да бъде сложен край.

**Malin Björk (GUE/NGL).** – Herr talman! När vi diskuterar Schengen får vi inte glömma att det inte bara handlar om fri rörlighet inom EU och att ha semesterplaner utan passet på fickan. Schengen har varit och fortsätter att vara förknippat med att stänga EU:s yttre gränser. Det har nu tagit sig till nivåer som är fruktansvärda att se. Vi ser det i Ceuta och Melilla, vi ser det vid grekiska gränsen, vi ser det på Balkan.

Vi ser en politik som sätter skyddet för yttre gränser högre än skyddet för människor. Men våra öppna inre gränser kan inte bygga på brott, kränkningar och brutalitet vid de yttre gränserna. Ett av de värsta exemplen i dag är tyvärr ordförandelandet Kroatien, där den delvis EU-finansierade gränspoliserna begår systematiska illegala "push backs". Jag har själv varit där, jag har sett det.

Kommissionen har ett ansvar för att utreda det här, men också för att sätta stopp för Kroatiens Schengenmedlemskap. Ett land ska inte belönas – inget land, Kroatien eller något annat – om man bryter mot mänskliga rättigheter vid EU:s yttre gränser.

**Lena Düpont (PPE).** – Mr President, I was three when the Berlin Wall fell. I was 13 when Schengen became an integral part of the Amsterdam Treaty. I was about to finish school when 10 new Member States joined our European family. Europe was always part of my life. I have experienced it as open, as free and as a promising continent and to be honest, I never expected to see border controls again.

Yet, understandably due to the nature of the pandemic, and the force with which it hit us, closing borders without coordination caused chaos at the beginning, and even long-forgotten hard rhetoric came up again.

The good thing is, we experienced how closely connected we are already, not only across border regions, not only economically, and we saw that Schengen, that our freedom, is vulnerable, that it is invaluable, and that we need to protect it.

Luckily, Schengen is getting back on track. Europe is getting back on track, with a lot of work ahead of us. So let us draw the obvious lessons learned in the past weeks. Let's prepare Schengen better and make full use of it for Europe's recovery. Let's make Europe come out stronger.

*(Applause)*

**Michal Šimečka (Renew).** – Vážený pán predsedajúci. V marci sme prvý raz možno naozaj vážne pocítili, aká krehká je sloboda, ktorú nám zaručuje Schengen, a ktorú sme doteraz brali ako samozrejmosť. Mimoriadna situácia si pochopteľne vyžadovala mimoriadne riešenia, vrátane kontrol na vnútorných hraniciach. No spôsob, akým členské štáty uzavreli svoje hranice, živelne, nekoordinovane, často bez jasného právneho základu, len zbytočne naštrbil dôveru, ktorú sme budovali roky, desaťročia v Schengen, aj v nás samotných. Asi si treba uvedomiť, že Schengen naozaj nie je nejakým luxusom, nice to have, do dobrého počasia, ale základným stavebným kameňom Európskej únie, našich slobôd a samozrejme aj jednotného trhu. A nič z toho nebude udržateľné, keď prvým inštinktom vlád v akejkoľvek krízovej situácii vždy bude iba unilaterálne a okamžité uzavretie vnútorných hraníc. Musíme sa z tejto skúsenosti poučiť. A teraz je ten moment, keď musíme pracovať na posilnení odolnosti Schengenského priestoru.

**Isabel Wiseler-Lima (PPE).** – Monsieur le Président, Schengen, qui aurait cru au succès du nom de cette charmante petite ville luxembourgeoise, située dans le triangle des frontières française, allemande et luxembourgeoise?

Schengen est devenue le symbole d'une Europe sans frontières. Passer d'un pays à l'autre est devenu si naturel que nous n'imaginions même plus la signification de devoir s'arrêter et se justifier. L'acquis de Schengen est, quant à la liberté individuelle, un acquis inestimable, une petite, non excusez-moi, une vraie merveille de l'unité européenne. Alors préservons-là.

La pandémie de COVID-19 a sûrement justifié les interdictions de mouvement imposées aux personnes en Europe. Créer un cordon sanitaire autour d'un foyer épidémique, quoi de plus normal? Celui-ci coïncide avec une frontière entre pays, c'est une aide salutaire. Mais comment justifier la fermeture d'une frontière là où la situation épidémique est identique d'un côté et de l'autre?

Il ne me viendrait pas à l'esprit de condamner que certains pays, dans un mouvement de panique, aient réagi par le repli sur soi. Disons que c'est l'irrationnel humain et soyons indulgents. Mais ensuite, il faut au plus vite que les pays rouvrent les frontières intérieures à Schengen, il faut surtout que, par-delà la crise de la COVID-19, certains pays ne mésusent pas de la possibilité, sauf dans des cas vraiment exceptionnels, de fermer leurs frontières. C'est pourtant...

*(Le Président retire la parole à l'oratrice)*

#### VORSITZ: RAINER WIELAND

*Vizepräsident*

**Karlo Ressler (PPE).** – Poštovani predsjedavajući, sloboda kretanja za više od 400 milijuna ljudi jedan je od temelja moderne Europe.

Globalna pandemija je, razumljivo, ponovno privremeno podignula unutarnje granice, ali Europa kakvu poznajemo ne postoji bez slobodnog kretanja, koje je ključno i za gospodarski oporavak, turizam, ali i za naš europski način života. Drago mi je da je Europski parlament rezolucijom pružio snažnu podršku i daljnjem širenje Schengena na sve države članice. To je vrlo važno i za Hrvatsku koja je spremna postati dio najvećeg prostora slobodnog kretanja na svijetu, kako je utvrdila i Europska komisija prošle godine. I danas smo, međutim, imali priliku čuti napade na moju zemlju zbog učinkovite politike zaštite najduže kopnene granice Europske unije.

Međutim, vjerujem da će hrvatski, ali i svi ostali europski građani uskoro uživati u svim prednostima hrvatskog članstva u Schengenu, boljoj prometnoj povezanosti, snažnijoj gospodarskoj suradnji, ali i još boljoj zaštiti vanjskih granica.

**Pascal Arimont (PPE).** – Herr Präsident, Frau Kommissarin! Wenn Sie wie ich jetzt drei Monate an der Grenze gelebt hätten, dann hätten Sie sehr konsterniert feststellen müssen, wie Schengen rechtlich, inhaltlich und symbolisch mit Füßen getreten worden ist.

Wenn Mitgliedstaaten auch in Zeiten von Krisen mit rein nationalen Maßnahmen einer Grenzschließung reagieren, dann haben sie vorher entweder nicht miteinander gesprochen oder sie haben kein Vertrauen ineinander – oder beides, und das ist schlimm. Und es wurde nichts abgesprochen, weder bei der Grenzschließung noch bei der Öffnung von verschiedenen wirtschaftlichen Sektoren noch bei Zusammenführungen von Familien und auch nicht bei der zeitlichen Einführung von Exit-Strategien. Das hat zu einem Flickenteppich an Kontrollmaßnahmen, an Schutzmaßnahmen, an neuen Regelungen geführt, die kein Mensch verstand und auch nicht nachvollziehen konnte.

Machen Sie es wie die Bürger in meinem Wahlkreis in Ostbelgien: Sie haben eine Petition eingereicht und fordern „Schengen 2.0“, das in Zukunft verhindern wird, dass –selbst in Pandemiezeiten – Grenzen geschlossen werden, damit aus diesen Grenzräumen wieder Gemeinschaftsräume werden.

**Ylva Johansson, Member of the Commission.** – Mr President, Schengen means freedom and Schengen is based on mutual trust. Schengen is a major achievement, and this is shown by the great engagement in this Parliament for this issue and for Schengen coming back to a fully functioning Schengen area.

When this first Schengen agreement was signed 35 years ago, there were millions of Europeans that didn't even have the right to leave their own country. The last few months have reminded us what Europe looks like without free movement.

Now slowly and responsibly we are regaining our freedoms. We cannot take the freedom of movement for granted. Nor, for that matter, the significant benefits of European integration. We need to work hard every day to preserve and protect our common European project.

To begin with, I would like to see the necessary decision in Council to welcome the waiting Member States into Schengen, but in the long run, we have to do better than a return to the *status quo*. And it must go without saying that, of course, all Member States, all Schengen members and all those that would like to be members of Schengen have to fully respect their fundamental rights and the European *acquis* of course.

A well-functioning Schengen area depends on mutual trust among Member States and on a correct and efficient implementation of the Schengen *acquis*. Differences in one Member State can affect all Member States and subsequently put the Schengen area at risk.

We must continue to make sure the Schengen legal framework is fit for purpose, so that it can meet new challenges such as the current health emergency.

First, through better and more correct implementation. That includes alternatives for internal border checks, such as police controls inside the territory supported by technology and reinforced cross-border cooperation and information exchange between law enforcement authorities.

To promote trust and then encourage exchange we will propose a renewed dialogue with all Member States and regular high-level political debates on the state of Schengen with Parliament and the Council. I am ready to continue to work closely, together with all of you in this House, towards this important goal.

**Nikolina Brnjac**, *President-in-Office of the Council*. – Mr President, the questions surrounding the application of internal border controls are vital for the preservation of the Schengen *acquis*.

Therefore, the Presidency, on behalf of the Council, is very much looking forward to working closely with the European Parliament and the Commission on providing for a legally-sound and operationally-correct structure that would meet all the concerns of the two co-legislators.

The Ministers of Home Affairs agreed, at an informal video conference on 5 June, to proceed in a coordinated, transparent and phased manner in line with the principles of proportionality and non-discrimination and based on the criteria defined in the Commission communication.

A broad majority of the Member States and the Schengen associate countries lifted controls at the internal borders and ended the related travel restrictions by 15 June. The rest have expressed their intention to do that by the end of this month.

**Der Präsident**. – Gemäß Artikel 136 Absatz 5 der Geschäftsordnung wurde ein Entschließungsantrag eingereicht.

Die Aussprache ist geschlossen.

Die Abstimmung findet am Freitag, 19. Juni 2020, statt.

*Schriftliche Erklärungen (Artikel 171)*

**Marc Angel (S&D)**, *in writing*. – The Schengen Agreement is not just one of the most important achievements of the EU, but also a key tool for a proper functioning Single Market. Internal border controls and closures have to be the exception to adequately remedy the serious threat to public policy or internal security. However, the European Parliament had to raise questions too often in the recent times about the legality and proportionality of the introduced and extended internal border controls. Member States' justification is based on the Covid-19 pandemic as well as on increased levels of migration and/or security threats. We definitely need a more appropriate Union-level coordination. More targeted restrictions applicable at regional level, including cross-border regions, would have been more appropriate and less intrusive. The lack of real communication on Member States' decisions led us to a situation where information on introduced border controls and restrictions were not correctly communicated to citizens and enterprises. The collateral consequences were huge. The Commission's responsibility is to exercise appropriate scrutiny over the application of the Schengen *acquis*, but the Commission also needs to be able to provide up-to-date information on Member States' rules to citizens. In that sense, I also welcome the creation of the 'Re-open EU' website.

**Tudor Ciuhodaru (S&D)**, *în scris*. – Vă solicit un pachet de măsuri de redresare și un Fond de solidaritate pentru Coronavirus; acces la finanțare, inclusiv pentru statele membre care nu fac parte din zona euro. (estimativ, PIB-ul UE va scădea cu 7,4 %); sumele din pachet să fie acordate prin împrumuturi și, în principal, prin granturi, plăți directe pentru investiții și capitaluri proprii; să se realizeze o evaluare înainte de încheierea strategiei de redresare și posibilitatea ca CFM să fie revizuit corespunzător, la jumătatea perioadei; să se calculeze noul fond de redresare și de transformare în afara sumelor din următorul CFM și acest fond de redresare să fie inclus într-un CFM consolidat și cu noi surse de finanțare; introducerea unei liste de potențiali candidați pentru noi resurse proprii: o bază fiscală consolidată comună a societăților, impozitarea serviciilor digitale, o taxă pe tranzacțiile financiare, venituri din schema de comercializare a certificatelor de emisii, o contribuție pentru materiale plastice și un mecanism de ajustare la frontieră a emisiilor de dioxid de carbon, dar și eliminarea tuturor corecțiilor și rabaturilor, a simplificării resurselor proprii bazate pe TVA și utilizării de amenzi și alte taxe ca surse de venit suplimentar pentru bugetul UE.

**Robert Hajšel (S&D)**, *písomne*. – Pri opätovnom otváraní vnútorných hraníc medzi členskými štátmi treba viac koordinácie a spolupráce a nemôže dochádzať ku diskriminácii. Tak ako pri zatváraní, tak aj pri otváraní hraníc niektoré štáty prijali nekoordinované kroky a niektoré hranice otvorili, iné nechali zatvorené, a to napriek odporúčaniam zo strany Európskej komisie. Ešte nejaký čas potrvá, pokiaľ sa naplno obnoví celý schengenský priestor bez kontroly na hraniciach, a treba sa pripraviť aj na to, aby v prípade prepuknutia druhej vlny šírenia koronavírusu štáty svoje kroky čo najviac koordinovali a vopred o nich ostatných informovali.

**Eugen Jurzyca (ECR)**, *písomne*. – Do značnej miery nesúhlasím s kritikou EÚ k obmedzeniam voľného pohybu osôb v Schengenskom priestore, ktoré v reakcii na pandémie prijali členské štáty. Členské štáty dokázali rýchlejšie reagovať na vzniknutú situáciu, okrem toho uzatvárali svoje hranice až v čase, keď sa nákaza šírila vo vnútri EÚ. Zároveň majú v oblasti verejného zdravia viac kompetencií, a teda aj zodpovednosti za zvládnutie krízovej situácie. Uzatvárali tiež oblasti vo vnútri členských štátov (napríklad Litovel v ČR, Žehra v SR), čo svedčí o tom, že úmysel členských štátov súvisel s ochranou verejného zdravia, nie so snahou o ovplyvnenie miery integrácie.

**Емил Радев (PPE)**, *в писмена форма*. – В последните десетилетия Европа не се беше сблъсквала с толкова сериозно предизвикателство като кризата с КОВИД-19. Тя постави на колене редица сектори, като пълните последици от кризата все още не могат да се предвидят. Едно от най-големите предизвикателства бе това пред ефективното и правилно функциониране на едно от най-големите постижения на нашия Съюз – Шенген. Искрено се надявам поредният призив на ниво ЕП за ускорено приемане на България и Румъния в Шенгенското пространство да не остане само на хартия, като резолюцията от 11.12.2018 г., а този път наистина да бъде чул от Съвета. Мястото на България е в Шенген. Изпълнили сме стриктно всички заложи критери и имаме пълен достъп до Шенгенската информационна система, но все още не сме пълноправен член. Взаимното доверие между държавите членки, сега повече от всякога, е ключово условие за ефективното функциониране на Шенгенското пространство, а България нееднократно е доказвала, че сигурно и надеждно пази външните граници на ЕС. В заключение отново ще призова Съвета да представи нов проект за решение относно присъединяването на България и Румъния към Шенгенското пространство по сухопътни, морски и въздушни граници, за да бъде Шенген още по-ефективен и да се постигне едно истинско и завършено свободно пространство за още повече европейски граждани.

**12. Akty delegowane (art. 111 ust. 6 Regulaminu) (podjęte działania): patrz protokół**

**13. Sprostowanie (art. 241 Regulaminu) (podjęte działania): patrz protokół**

## 14. Ochrona pracowników transgranicznych i sezonowych w Unii w kontekście kryzysu wywołanego COVID-19 (debata)

**Der Präsident.** – Als nächster Punkt der Tagesordnung folgt die Aussprache über die Erklärungen des Rates und der Kommission zum Europäischem Schutz von Grenzgängern und Saisonarbeitskräften im Zusammenhang mit der COVID-19-Krise (2020/2664(RSP)).

Ich weise die Mitglieder darauf hin, dass es bei dieser Aussprache keine spontanen Wortmeldungen gibt und dass keine blauen Karten akzeptiert werden.

**Nikolina Brnjac, President-in-Office of the Council.** – Mr President, cross-border and seasonal workers support the agriculture, tourism and hospitality industries when labour demand cannot be covered by the host Member State.

Working away from home is hard enough. Protecting this vulnerable group of workers is therefore even more pressing especially during these times of unprecedented challenges following the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Confinement and social distancing measures have had a substantial negative effect on the European economy. Unemployment rates have risen within a short period and businesses are facing difficulties, some sectors more than others. Member States have implemented a large number of measures to prevent and mitigate severe economic implications on labour markets and national social security and welfare systems. Many of these measures aim to protect workers in particularly sensitive sectors of the economy.

While the health emergency is slowly receding and confinement measures are gradually being lifted, the economic and social difficulties remain intense. On 5 May, a video conference organised by the Presidency offered the opportunity to employment and social policy Ministers to share their views on existing strategies. While underlining the importance of a quick economic recovery, Ministers expressed their support for strategies built on a coordinated approach, safeguarding employability, supporting businesses and protecting groups in need.

The issue of cross-border and seasonal workers was brought up many times throughout the discussions. This vulnerable group is considered essential for many economic sectors. It has a vital role to play in the economic recovery and its members should not be discriminated against.

The COVID-19 pandemic forced Member States to close their borders temporarily. Nevertheless, Member States and the members of the European Council indicated clearly in a joint statement on 26 March that smooth border management for persons and goods should be assured in order to preserve the functioning of the single market. While some Member States have already lifted all travel restrictions for cross-border and seasonal workers, others have committed to do so as soon as possible.

Ensuring safe working conditions is as important as ensuring free movement. It is essential that this vulnerable group of workers enjoy equal treatment to that provided for workers who are nationals of the host Member State. They should receive adequate protection equipment and, where provided, they should be offered adequate accommodation in compliance with social distancing measures. Moreover, workers should be trained and informed about changes and new procedures.

Member States are also committed to ensuring access to affordable social security for all citizens in cross-border situations. The revision of regulations on the coordination of the social security system would further facilitate the free movement of workers and would act as a catalyst for modernising the national social security system.

I would like to thank Parliament for keeping these problems faced by cross-border and seasonal workers high on the agenda. I look forward to this debate.

**Nicolas Schmit, Member of the Commission.** – Mr President, the free movement of workers is a key principle of the EU internal market. Millions of Europeans live or work in a Member State other than that of their nationality. We estimate that more than half a million workers are covering seasonal work in the EU. The COVID-19 crisis has led to unprecedented measures across EU Member States, having a direct impact on the free movement of workers, as was shown in the previous debates.

The role of the Commission is clear – ensure free movement of workers. In this context, on 30 March the Commission published guidelines concerning the exercise of the free movement of workers. The goal was for frontier, posted and seasonal workers exercising critical occupations to have unhampered access to their workplace. We talk a lot about frontline workers and I have to repeat that among these frontline workers there are a lot also of seasonal workers who have played an indispensable role and have worked for critical goods and services like, for instance, foods.

To ensure further clarity regarding social security, the Commission also published a fact sheet of questions and answers, including information for the attention of frontier and posted workers affected by the restrictions on free movement related to COVID-19. Based on the dialogue with Member States and stakeholders, we note that the guidelines have had a positive effect. We continue to monitor that the measures adopted by the Member States are necessary and proportionate for the fight against the spread of the virus and non-discriminatory.

Important sectors of the European economy, in particular the agricultural and tourism sectors, require the support of seasonal workers for specific periods of the year. Seasonal workers are often vulnerable to abuses and precarious working and living conditions, including health and safety, access to public services and decent housing, infringement of labour law and inadequate social security coverage. They are also more exposed to undeclared work, in particular in the form of unregistered employment.

The COVID-19 pandemic rendered more visible and acute the problems that many seasonal workers have faced for longer periods. While the situation has been improving recently, significant problems for seasonal workers still persist and need to be addressed. The principle applied to seasonal workers is very, very clear – equal treatment and no discrimination of EU mobile workers compared with national workers. This ensures the best protection for EU mobile workers, including for cross-border and seasonal workers. It means, for seasonal workers, they have exactly the same rights as nationals or residents of the Member State in which they work.

Equal treatment requires proper application of national labour law, including those laws which result, from EU directives, to mobile workers. Given that certain sectors of the economy, and especially the agricultural sector, require the support of seasonal workers from other Member States, the Commission asked Member States to exchange information and establish specific procedures to ensure smooth circulation for such workers. In this respect, I welcome the joint declaration on the protection of seasonal workers signed on 15 May by the European social partners in agriculture. I also welcome the announcement by a Member State to adapt its national legislation and to better control its application.

Our data confirms that the seasonal activities are exposed to undeclared work, often associated with abuses or limited access to social rights and health and safety for workers. In this context, it is essential to raise workers' and employers' awareness towards the benefits of declared work and the transition to declared work. This is actually the focus of the EU for Fair Work campaign of the European platform on tackling undeclared work. Europe can also play a role in this context by developing actions with a focus on activities for cross-border workers, seasonal workers and, especially, young people. In the near future, both the platform and the US-European coordination office will be transferred to the European Labour Authority (ELA). Once fully operational, the ELA will assist Member States and the Commission in the effective application and enforcement of Union law related to labour mobility across the Union and the coordination of social security systems within the Union.

One of the aims of the EU rules on social security coordination is to ensure that persons who work in two or more Member States, such as seasonal workers, are subject to the legislation of the Member State with which they have the closest links, promoting stable and continuous social security coverage. Frequent changes in the applicable social security legislation may create an obstacle to the free movement of workers.

I am convinced that the mutual assistance and cooperation between Member States, such as the conclusion of bilateral agreements or making available information in the language of the seasonal workers on social security issues is essential to protect the rights of seasonal workers. The revision of the Social Security Regulation for which the Commission made a proposal back in 2016 is still being discussed between Parliament and Council. I am fully committed to help you finalising this important modernisation of the rules as soon as possible. I also want to repeat my full support for the introduction of a European social security number, requested in your draft resolution.

Let me also make an important point on the health and safety of workers. Given the unprecedented crisis we are going through, this is one of the issues where we cannot fail our citizens. We have solid EU legislation on health and safety at work that applies to all workers, independently of the country where they work, the duration of the assignment or the precise tasks carried out. Ensuring the health and safety of workers is our shared responsibility. It is the employer's obligation to comply with all requirements and assess all possible risks at work, including new ones, and to put in place adequate preventive and protective measures. The completeness of this evaluation is particularly important in sectors where workers may be particularly exposed. Employers are also obliged to provide workers with related information as well as necessary protective equipment and hygiene products.

Besides the guidelines on seasonal workers under preparation by the Commission, the EU has taken numerous steps to support Member States in this regard. But I have to add that it is Member States' responsibility to control the application of the rights and labour standards which are also applicable to seasonal workers.

The EU European Agency for Health and Safety at Work has published guidance addressing COVID-19 at the workplace, as well as the safe and healthy return to workplaces after COVID. These documents assist employers in dealing with health and safety aspects at work. They also refer to the relevant national guidance for specific sectors and occupations, including those that are particularly susceptible to employ seasonal workers.

I assure you that the protection of workers' health and safety is one of my main priorities for the years to come. I will be working closely with the members of the European Parliament, notably in view of updating the strategic framework of health and safety at work that will provide us with opportunities to look at post-COVID-19 health and safety implications at the workplace, including for the most vulnerable workers.

We are not forgetting that many seasonal workers are third country nationals and the COVID-19 crisis has had a significant impact on the possibility for these workers to enter the Union. The Commission considers that these workers, in particular in the agricultural sector, often have an essential function. Therefore, already in March, we recommended Member States to authorise the entry of non-EU seasonal workers in agriculture, despite the closure of the EU external border.

I welcome your resolution as an important contribution to future policy making. We want to achieve the same goal, ensuring that the rights of seasonal workers are protected, that the EU rules are enforced, and that the pillar of social rights applies to everybody.

**Jeroen Lenaers**, *namens de PPE-Fractie*. – Voorzitter, we horen het vaak van de populisten in dit huis: Schengen moet op de schroothoop en de grenzen moeten dicht. Dat is hun toekomstbeeld voor Europa. Helaas, dat toekomstbeeld hebben we de afgelopen maanden al even mogen proberen. En wat blijkt? Dat toekomstbeeld, die droom van Le Pen, Baudet en Wilders is een nachtmerrie voor miljoenen gewone Europeanen.

Familieleden die hun dierbaren niet konden begraven omdat een container op de grens de weg verspert. Aardbeien en asperges die staan te rotten op het veld, omdat de seizoensarbeiders die ze komen oogsten de grens niet over komen. Grensondernemers die het faillissement in gejaagd worden omdat ze nergens terecht kunnen. Je weet pas wat je mist als je het niet meer hebt. Een crue constatering, maar ook een belangrijke les.

Trap niet in het "grenzen dicht"-frame van de nextieptoefters in dit huis. Laten we onze verworvenheden koesteren en samen blijven werken aan een echt eerlijke arbeidsmarkt, een grensoverschrijdende markt, waar hard werken beloofd wordt, waar een fatsoenlijke huisvesting de norm is, waar malafide bedrijven aangepakt worden en waar rechten beschermd worden. Dat is mijn toekomstbeeld voor Europa!



**Gabriele Bischoff**, *im Namen der S&D-Fraktion*. – Herr Präsident! Gestern wurden in Deutschland wieder Hunderte Corona-Neuinfektionen im größten Fleischbetrieb Deutschlands bekannt.

Es macht mich fassungslos und es zeigt, dass Unternehmen wie Tönnies aus der Krise nichts gelernt haben und völlig verantwortungslos vorgehen. Jetzt versuchen auch noch einige, die Schuld den betroffenen rumänischen und bulgarischen Beschäftigten zuzuschreiben: Sie hätten das Virus über die Grenze eingeschleppt.

Populismus breitet sich aus, und wir müssen diese Zustände wirklich beenden. Deshalb ist diese Entschließung ein guter Schritt. Aber *guidelines* reichen nicht aus. Wir brauchen wirklich harte Maßnahmen. Wir müssen EU-Recht da verbessern, wo es Lücken hat, und wir müssen das Recht wieder besser durchsetzen.

Aber ich möchte hier noch mal einen Appell richten an all die mobilen Arbeitnehmerinnen und Arbeitnehmer, an die Grenzgänger: Bitte verlieren Sie wegen der Grenzschließung und der Situation nicht die Hoffnung auf einen fairen und freien europäischen Arbeitsmarkt, auf faire Mobilität! Wir als Parlament setzen uns dafür ein, dass es hier zu Änderungen kommt.

**Dacian Cioloș**, *în numele grupului Renew*. – Domnule președinte, domnule comisar, dragi colegi, în primul rând vreau să identificăm corect obiectul acestei rezoluții. Muncitorii sezonieri și transfrontalieri sunt inima care pompează energie în multe sectoare ale economiei europene. Sunt cetățeni care pleacă pentru un timp mai scurt sau mai lung de lângă familiile lor din România, Bulgaria, Polonia, Portugalia sau Spania și ajută să funcționeze industrii importante din alte state membre. Sunt, de asemenea, un sprijin financiar pentru cei pe care îi lasă acasă, pentru familiile și copiii lor.

Avem, în Uniunea Europeană, sectoare întregi care depind de muncitorii sezonieri. S-a văzut în criza pe care o traversăm că, atunci când acești cetățeni nu se pot deplasa între granițe, sunt puși în pericol producția de alimente, transporturile, multe servicii din turism sau alte servicii sociale, de îngrijire și medicale.

Spun toate aceste lucruri ca să înțelegem importanța acestor lucrători pentru Uniune, pentru statele membre, pentru fermele mai mari sau mai mici, pentru firme de construcții, pentru spitale, hoteluri sau firme de transport. Din aceste motive, cred că protejarea lor, acolo unde lucrează, face parte dintr-un respect minimal pe care-l datorăm noi acestor oameni fără de care multe sectoare economice-cheie ar fi blocate.

Am văzut însă în această criză și că mulți dintre lucrătorii sezonieri sunt cazați în condiții mizere, că nu li se asigură condiții minime de igienă și, după ce se îmbolnăvesc, nu au parte de un tratament medical adecvat. Am văzut chiar oameni care au murit din cauza neglijenței și a faptului că drepturile lor sociale nu le sunt respectate. De aceea, în numele Grupului Renew, am inițiat această rezoluție și mă bucur că avem o susținere largă a acestui demers.

Le suntem datori acestor oameni cu claritatea regulilor în care își desfășoară activitatea, cu monitorizarea permanentă a condițiilor de cazare și cu suspendarea activității firmelor care încearcă să îi păcălească. Este nevoie de coordonare europeană a legislației europene și aici, domnule comisar, contez pe dumneavoastră. Trebuie să lucrăm împreună, Comisia, Parlamentul și Consiliul ca să dăm o ghidare... (*Președintele a retras cuvântul vorbitorului*)

**France Jamet**, *au nom du groupe ID*. – Monsieur le Président, mes chers collègues, cette résolution, qui vise à régler la libre circulation et la protection des travailleurs, quel que soit leur statut, pose un problème.

Encore une fois, la commission s'acharne à consacrer le caractère quasiment divin de la libre circulation des travailleurs, et donc du travail détaché. Les considérants de la résolution instituent la nécessité de mise en œuvre du principe d'égalité de traitement et de non-discrimination, qui s'oppose au principe d'une priorité nationale qui nous est si chère.

Classer dans la même catégorie le travail détaché, les frontaliers et les saisonniers consiste à nous forcer la main sur un texte qui contredit deux principes fondamentaux aux intérêts de nos compatriotes: supprimer le travail détaché et mettre en place une priorité nationale.

**Petra De Sutter**, *on behalf of the Verts/ALE Group*. – Mr President, this pandemic highlights precarious working conditions for 17 million mobile workers in the EU, of whom hundreds of thousands are cross-border, frontier and seasonal workers.

Better social protection was already needed before this crisis, but the lack of safety measures on asparagus or strawberry farms, or in slaughterhouses in the Netherlands or Germany, opened many eyes. Health and safety measures against COVID-19 are not always respected at the workplace, and that is why written instructions like display notices must be used. Crossing borders must also be easy for them, and a better coordination of social security systems has become a matter of high urgency.

These workers are in the front line: in hospitals and nursing homes in Austria for example, where many female health workers from Romania and Bulgaria work overtime. They provide a vital workforce. We must provide them with vital social, and health and safety, protection. This is a matter of social justice.

**Elżbieta Rafalska**, *w imieniu grupy ECR*. – Panie Przewodniczący! Pani Komisarz! Pracownicy przygraniczni i sezonowi zostali w sposób szczególnie dotknięci z powodu koronawirusa. Z powodu zamkniętych granic, obowiązku kwarantanny, czasem bez możliwości powrotu do kraju, bez opieki zdrowotnej i źródeł utrzymania byli narażeni na większe ryzyko zachorowania. Są też bardziej niż inni zależni od pracodawców i agencji pracy tymczasowej. Ich warunki zakwaterowania są złe. Wykonują pracę w trudnych warunkach i często dochodzi do naruszeń transgranicznych i sezonowych praw pracowników w zakresie ich czasu pracy, płacy minimalnej, standardów bezpieczeństwa i higieny pracy. To pokazuje, z jakimi problemami borykają się pracownicy sezonowi, najczęściej pochodzący z Europy Wschodniej. Pandemia pokazała też, jak niezbędni i niedoceniani są pracownicy, od których zależy wiele sektorów. Pora ich docenić, poprawić wizerunek tej pracy, zaproponować też rozwiązania, które ukróćą skalę nadużyć występujących już przez pandemią. Co Komisja Europejska ma w tej kwestii...

*(Przewodniczący odebrał mówczyni głos)*

**Marc Botenga**, *au nom du groupe GUE/NGL*. – Monsieur le Président, chers collègues nous allons voter une résolution portant sur les droits des travailleurs transfrontaliers saisonniers et détachés et je suis particulièrement heureux de pouvoir la co-introduire non seulement avec la gauche, mais aussi avec la droite et même les libéraux.

Je trouve que c'est formidable, parce que pour certains d'entre vous, ce sera peut-être la première fois que vous allez admettre que la priorité absolue au marché nuit aux droits des travailleurs. Certes, vous n'êtes pas encore prêts à parler de dumping social – si vous changez d'avis, on a soumis un amendement, vous pouvez le voter – mais je veux quand même encourager et applaudir le pas que vous franchissez aujourd'hui.

Maintenant, vous dites que la crise du coronavirus vous a ouvert les yeux sur la souffrance et l'exploitation des travailleurs mobiles en Europe. Ça je n'y crois pas trop. Je pense que ce qui vous a fait bouger, c'est la pression que vous avez ressentie, la pression et la rage de ces travailleurs exploités, empilés les uns sur les autres dans des petits vans ou même des vols entiers, de la Roumanie à l'Allemagne par exemple.

Mais bon, peu importe ce qui vous a fait bouger. Ce qui compte pour moi, c'est de voir comment on peut continuer, parce qu'ici, on est encore une fois face à une résolution non contraignante. Alors vous votez ceci, très bien, maintenant faisons le pas suivant et adaptons les règles européennes pour que, effectivement, les droits des travailleurs reçoivent la priorité sur les libertés économiques et sur le marché.

**Daniela Rondinelli (NI)**. – Signor Presidente, onorevoli colleghi, la pandemia ci ha dimostrato in queste settimane che il mercato del lavoro europeo è molto più integrato di quello che immaginiamo. Abbiamo capito che, senza la libera circolazione dei lavoratori, soprattutto gli stagionali e i transfrontalieri, interi settori produttivi e strategici per l'Unione europea rischiano di bloccarsi.

Il lavoratore, da quando lascia il proprio paese di origine con i corridoi verdi, ha la necessità di essere tutelato con elevati standard di protezione, di alloggio, di condizioni di lavoro e di remunerazione, fino al pieno riconoscimento dei suoi diritti acquisiti in termini di sicurezza sociale, che per noi devono ricadere nel paese dove il lavoratore presta la propria attività lavorativa e dove appunto ne paga le tasse.

L'Unione secondo noi deve promuovere l'armonizzazione delle legislazioni nazionali del lavoro per risolvere il *dumping* salariale, ma anche per affrontare quel nuovo *dumping* che sta avanzando e che si basa proprio sulla salute e sicurezza dei lavoratori.

Credo che questa risoluzione la possiamo sostenere, soprattutto se può rappresentare la base per nuovi provvedimenti legislativi per tutelare al meglio i lavoratori europei e per eliminare quella concorrenza sleale che ancora oggi purtroppo caratterizza il mercato interno ... (il Presidente toglie la parola all'oratrice)

**Dennis Radtke (PPE).** – Herr Präsident, liebe Kolleginnen und Kollegen! Das politische Modewort der Stunde ist ja „systemrelevant“.

Um es auch mal zu benutzen, haben wir in den letzten Wochen festgestellt, wie systemrelevant der europäische Binnenmarkt und auch die Arbeitnehmerfreizügigkeit für unsere nationalen Volkswirtschaften sind. Auf der anderen Seite haben wir aber auch gesehen, wie fragil dieses System ist. Tschechische Pflegekräfte und Ärzte, die in deutschen Krankenhäusern arbeiten, mussten sich auf einmal von heute auf morgen zwischen Beruf und Familie entscheiden, weil die Grenzen geschlossen wurden. Deutsche und französische Landwirte hatten Sorge um ihre Ernte, weil sie keine Erntehelfer mehr bekommen haben.

Und als sei das alles noch nicht genug, ist uns auch noch mal der Zustand in der Fleischindustrie in Deutschland und in den Niederlanden vor Augen geführt worden – Zustände, die bekannt waren, die aber jetzt das Fass zum Überlaufen gebracht haben. Deswegen ist es gut, dass wir als Parlament heute vorlegen mit dieser EntschlieÙung. Jetzt ist es an der Kommission und vor allen Dingen an den Mitgliedstaaten, dem, was hier ins Rollen gebracht worden ist, auch Taten folgen zu lassen und auch zu liefern.

**Agnes Jongerius (S&D).** – Voorzitter, je vraagt je af wat voor een gedachte er speelt in het hoofd van iemand die arbeidsmigranten uit Polen en Roemenië 14 uur per dag, 42 dagen achter elkaar laat werken. Wat bezielt iemand die iemand op straat dreigt te zetten, omdat deze arbeidsmigrant zich ziek wil melden met koorts. Waar denk je aan als je een Roemeense arbeidsmigrant langs de kant van de weg dumpst en aan zijn lot overlaat in een vreemd land?

Dat zijn helaas voorbeelden uit de afgelopen weken uit mijn land, Nederland. Je denkt, wat mij betreft: “Wat beweegt mensen?” Maar je dankt mensen niet af. Je dumpst ze niet op straat. Mensen zijn geen wegwerpartikel. De uitzendbazen, de agrarische sector en de voedingsindustrie zijn wat mij betreft door de bodem gezakt. Van oost naar west zijn we het er nu over eens: hier moet iets aan gebeuren!

In onze resolutie staan voorstellen om deze misstanden en uitbuiting aan te pakken. Bind de uitzendbureaus aan regels met een herziening van de uitzendrichtlijn. Stel normen op rond fatsoenlijke huisvesting met privacy en een huurcontract. En ga handhaven met meer inspecteurs in de risicosectoren en met een Europees socialezekerheidsnummer.

Ik vertrouw erop dat eurocommissaris Schmit meteen werk maakt van de misstanden die we op dit moment zien en dat hij aan de slag gaat met deze resolutie. De Europese lidstaten moeten nu met maatregelen komen. Ze moeten in actie komen, want in een ander Europees land werken is wat mij betreft een groot goed. Het is een werknemersrecht. Maar dan moet iedereen in Europa wel zeker kunnen zijn van een gezonde en veilige werkplaats.

**Dragoș Pîslaru (Renew).** – Domnule președinte, această rezoluție inițiată de Grupul Renew Europe și pe care am avut onoarea să o coordonez este dedicată muncitorilor transfrontalieri și sezonieri, români, polonezi, bulgari sau de alte naționalități, care au trebuit să moară în containere, să fie infectați cu Covid-19 și să sufere în condiții improprie pentru ca astăzi să ne putem uni cu toții, est și vest, nord și sud, stânga și dreapta, pentru a putea reacționa cu fermitate și consens.

Criza ne-a arătat cât de vulnerabili suntem. Din păcate, aceste vulnerabilități persistă de ani de zile. Destul! Muncitorii transfrontalieri sunt unul dintre cele mai puternice simboluri ale Uniunii Europene, un simbol pentru libertatea de mișcare și pentru prosperitatea pieței interne, având o contribuție esențială pentru sectoarele economice ale Europei.

Vă auzim și vom lupta, astăzi și în viitor, pentru dreptul vostru la libertatea de mișcare, pentru dreptul de a vă putea urma visul european, de avea un trai, o locuință, o viață decentă, de a lucra pe piața muncii oriunde în Europa și de a fi respectați și tratați fără discriminare. Noi toți, Parlament, Comisie, state membre avem responsabilitatea morală și legală de a vă asigura tot ce aveți nevoie acum și în viitor.

**Alessandro Panza (ID).** – Signor Presidente, onorevoli colleghi, devo dire che condivido, seppur con alcune riserve, il contenuto della risoluzione che è stata presentata sulla tutela dei lavoratori transfrontalieri, categoria lavorativa particolarmente colpita dalla crisi del Covid-19.

Per quanto riguarda l'Italia, sono oltre centomila i lavoratori che ogni giorno si recano oltre confine per prestare la loro attività lavorativa in altri paesi, come Francia, Austria e persino a San Marino. Di questi, però, oltre 70 000 lavorano in Svizzera. Per questo è necessario, da una parte, che l'invito di questa risoluzione sia esteso anche agli Stati confinanti, come appunto la Svizzera o il Regno Unito, per assicurare condizioni di lavoro dignitose e misure di protezione adeguate, al fine di tutelare tutti i lavoratori frontalieri, in particolare gli stagionali che, per la natura della loro base contrattuale, rientrano in una fascia di particolare fragilità.

Dall'altra parte, invece, auspichiamo che gli Stati applichino concretamente e non solo a chiacchiere delle misure di tutela per quei lavoratori frontalieri e stagionali, che a causa della crisi del Covid-19 hanno perso il lavoro. In tutto questo, ovviamente, non si ravvede alcuna necessità di procedere alla regolarizzazione di immigrati clandestini, come è avvenuto in Italia, il cui unico risultato è stato quello di incrementare gli ingressi illegali all'interno dell'Unione europea.

**Mounir Satouri (Verts/ALE).** – Monsieur le Président, Monsieur le Commissaire, avec la crise de la COVID-19, les États membres et l'Union européenne se sont rendus responsables de nombreuses violations des droits des travailleurs mobiles.

En fermant brusquement les frontières, les plus précaires parmi les précaires, les travailleurs migrants des pays tiers, se sont retrouvés seuls face aux abus de certains employeurs: sans couverture sociale, sans ressources et dans des conditions de logement indécentes, sans possibilité parfois de rentrer chez eux. N'en déplaise aux nationalistes, ces personnes sont essentielles à notre économie, à notre agriculture, à la construction de nos pays, et ce traitement n'est pas digne des valeurs européennes. Sur le sol européen, l'égalité des droits de toutes et de tous doit être définitivement proclamé.

Cette résolution est une avancée, mais il faut encore aller plus loin. Il est temps que l'Europe passe de l'exploitation de ces travailleurs migrants à la reconnaissance de leur contribution à notre économie et à notre souveraineté alimentaire. Il est temps que l'égalité des droits devienne une réalité concrète, véritable et vérifiable.

**Lucia Ďuriš Nicholsonová (ECR).** – Vážený pán predsedajúci. V celej Európskej únii máme 1,3 milióna cezhraničných pracovníkov a 2 milióny vyslaných pracovníkov. A počas korony, keď sa zatvorili hranice medzi jednotlivými štátmi Európskej únie, sme mohli vidieť, akým zraniteľným terčom sa títo ľudia stali. Častokrát si museli vybrať či zostanú s rodinou a príjdu o prácu, alebo naopak či pôjdu do práce, zostanú izolovaní od rodiny na celé mesiace. Tým, že sa mnohí nedostali do práce, tak niektoré segmenty ako poľnohospodárstvo, sociálne služby alebo preprava tovarov samozrejme trpeli akútnym nedostatkom pracovníkov. Títo ľudia sa nachádzajú v permanentnej sociálnej neistote, pretože stoja v dvoch a viacerých sociálnych systémoch. Sú často diskriminovaní. Pozrime sa na rakúsku indexáciu rodinných prídavkov. Pre budúcu krízu sa musíme poučiť, spriechodniť pre nich hranice a konečne skoordinať systémy sociálneho zabezpečenia vrátane digitálneho prepojenia systémov.

**Leila Chaïbi (GUE/NGL).** – Monsieur le Président, chers collègues, je voudrais vous parler de Yasmine.

Yasmine ramasse les melons, les abricots et les pêches qu'on aime bien manger en ce moment. Yasmine travaille 260 heures par mois, elle est payée des miettes. Elle a des journées sans pause, alors quand elle veut manger, elle est obligée de se cacher dans les toilettes. Yasmine est malade, elle a une sclérose en plaques, à cause de toutes ces années passées à travailler dans ces conditions. En plus, elle n'est même pas couverte par la sécurité sociale.

Ce dont je vous parle, c'est le quotidien de centaines de travailleurs et de travailleuses détachés, saisonniers, des travailleurs qui viennent d'Espagne et qui sont parfois originaires de Guinée, de Colombie, qui sont détachés en France, en Allemagne ou ailleurs pour ramasser les fruits et les légumes.

La crise de la COVID-19 a exacerbé les difficultés qui sont vécues par ces travailleurs exploités qui, souvent, ont été hébergés pendant cette crise dans des conditions de misère extrêmes, propices à la propagation du coronavirus.

L'exploitation de ces hommes et de ces femmes doit cesser. Elle est inacceptable et il est grand temps que l'Union européenne garantisse le respect des droits de ces travailleurs et abroge la directive sur le travail détaché.

**Daniel Buda (PPE).** – Domnule președinte, dragi colegi, lucrătorii sezonieri și transfrontalieri reprezintă o categorie indispensabilă pentru foarte multe sectoare de activitate. În perioada pandemiei Covid-19, lipsa acestora a pus în pericol însăși existența multor ferme din țările Uniunii Europene. În același timp însă, în foarte multe state, aceștia au ajuns în situații dificile care le-au pus în pericol viața și securitatea socială.

Domnule comisar, Uniunea Europeană trebuie să găsească mecanisme prin care să le fie impuse statelor membre de destinație obligativitatea asigurării unor condiții de muncă sigure, precum și garantarea unor salarii adecvate pentru munca prestată. Condițiile de cazare trebuie să respecte standardele legale și rezonabile de viață, iar asigurările sociale să le garanteze protejarea lor reală în caz de îmbolnăvire, inclusiv în situația apariției unei pandemii.

De asemenea, se impune înființarea unor linii telefonice care să fie disponibile în mai multe limbi ale țărilor Uniunii Europene, astfel încât acei lucrătorii să aibă posibilitatea, o dată în plus, de a-și verifica drepturile și obligațiile, dar și de a reclama abuzurile sau încălcări ale contractelor lor de muncă.

**Estrella Durá Ferrandis (S&D).** – Señor presidente, la pandemia actual ha dejado al descubierto que la movilidad de los trabajadores migrantes en Europa no siempre respeta la igualdad de trato con los nacionales. Me refiero tanto a trabajadores intraeuropeos como a aquellos provenientes de terceros países, como es el caso de los trabajadores temporales en el sector agrícola, que tanto han contribuido al abastecimiento de productos básicos durante esta crisis.

Hemos conocido casos de condiciones laborales extremas, precarias y de riesgo para su salud y vida. Por tanto, es necesario detectar posibles abusos y fraudes porque, aun siendo minoritarios, son muy sangrantes y dañan la imagen del sector y crean competencia desleal.

También ocurre en otros sectores en los que operan intermediarios laborales fraudulentos, que captan trabajadores en un país para llevarlos a otro en condiciones de explotación laboral y desprotegidos, como fue el caso de trabajadores españoles, rumanos y búlgaros en Holanda.

Europa no puede permitirse esto. Todos los trabajadores sin excepción deben disfrutar de igualdad de trato, protección social, condiciones laborales dignas y acceso a ayudas estatales, independientemente de su país de origen o destino.

**Sylvie Brunet (Renew).** – Monsieur le Président, Monsieur le Commissaire, chers collègues, je me félicite de l'initiative de cette résolution sur la protection des travailleurs saisonniers frontaliers dans le cas de la crise de la COVID-19.

Nous ne découvrons pas la situation avec cette crise, mais elle l'a amplifiée. Si le principe de la libre circulation des travailleurs européens au sein de l'Union européenne est un droit essentiel, il ne doit pas contrevenir au principe d'un traitement égal entre eux. La crise du coronavirus a malheureusement révélé l'existence d'abus et d'entorses à la législation européenne, que chaque État membre a pourtant la responsabilité de faire respecter.

Je voudrais donc insister sur la nécessité d'assurer aux travailleurs saisonniers et frontaliers une protection sociale efficace, ainsi que des conditions de santé et de sécurité adéquates. Enfin, je veux rappeler le rôle majeur de l'autorité européenne du travail, des inspections du travail et d'une transposition rapide et adéquate de la directive révisée sur les travailleurs détachés.

**Miroslav Radačovský (NI).** – Vážený pán predsedajúci. Podporujem v celom rozsahu návrh uznesenia týkajúci sa zahraničných a sezónnych zamestnancov. Je všeobecne známe, že predovšetkým sezónni zamestnanci pochádzajú zo sociálne slabších skupín, že pochádzajú z krajín východnej Európy a pochádzajú z krajín tretích. Je tiež všeobecne známe, že pracujú na základe krátkodobých zmlúv, majú zlé pracovné podmienky, často minimálnu mzdu. Je preto potrebné zaoberať sa týmito skutočnosťami, aby pracovné podmienky týchto zamestnancov, ktorí tvoria značný príjem pre krajiny, v ktorých pracujú, boli dostatočne akceptovateľné a v súlade s európskou legislatívou. Musíme rozmýšľať aj do budúcnosti a myslieť na to, že možno raz takéto podmienky a sezónne zamestnanie sa bude týkať aj mužov, žien z Paríža, Švédska a z iných krajín, že budú prichádzať do krajín východnej Európy pracovať. Teda aj aby oni mali podmienky rovnaké, aké sú teraz.

**Guido Reil (ID).** – Herr Präsident, liebe Kolleginnen und Kollegen! In Deutschland gibt es einen neuen Corona-Hotspot, und betroffen ist wieder einmal die Fleischindustrie.

600 Neuinfizierte – 7 000 Mitarbeiter sind in Quarantäne bei Tönnies, Deutschlands größtem Fleischkonzern, und diese Mitarbeiter kommen zum ganz großen Teil aus Rumänien und Bulgarien. Und was sagt jetzt der Ministerpräsident von Nordrhein-Westfalen – der christdemokratische Ministerpräsident – dazu: Verantwortlich für die Neuinfektionen seien nicht die sklavenähnlichen Arbeitsbedingungen und die sklavenähnlichen Wohnbedingungen dieser Menschen. Verantwortlich dafür sei ihre Heimfahrt am Wochenende.

Also ich bin entsetzt, ich bin absolut entsetzt über solch eine Aussage. Die Freizügigkeit mit Rumänien und Bulgarien hat in Nordrhein-Westfalen tatsächlich zu echten Problemen geführt: Lohndumping, Schwarzarbeit, Sozialbetrug, Prostitution, Kriminalität. Aber diesen Menschen vorzuwerfen, nach Hause zu fahren und sich dort anzustecken, das halte ich persönlich für ausländerfeindlich. Ich bin entsetzt über so einen Ministerpräsidenten und so einen Landesherrn.

**Terry Reintke (Verts/ALE).** – Herr Präsident! Hunderte neue Corona-Fälle in einem Schlachthof in Gütersloh. Und in der Tat: Das Erste, was dem nordrhein-westfälischen Ministerpräsidenten Armin Laschet dazu einfällt, ist: Das hätten ja die rumänischen und bulgarischen Arbeitnehmerinnen und Arbeitnehmer selber mitgebracht.

Entschuldigung, aber das geht einfach gar nicht! Erstens, weil es ein altes fremdenfeindliches Narrativ bedient, nämlich dass die Ausländer irgendwelche Krankheiten mitbringen. Zweitens, weil Armin Laschet damit die Verantwortung von sich schiebt.

In einem geeinten Europa ist es natürlich die Verantwortung des nordrhein-westfälischen Ministerpräsidenten, auch die bulgarischen und rumänischen Arbeitnehmerinnen und Arbeitnehmer im Blick zu haben. Denn sie arbeiten häufig unter menschenunwürdigen Bedingungen zu einem Hungerlohn und sind eingepfercht in Massenunterkünften.

Deshalb brauchen wir Ministerpräsidenten, die sich um die Rechte von Arbeitnehmerinnen und Arbeitnehmern kümmern, egal welche Nationalität diese Arbeitnehmerinnen und Arbeitnehmer haben, und eine Europäische Arbeitsagentur, die geltendes Recht kontrollieren und durchsetzen kann. Und wenn das alles nicht reicht, dann schrecken wir hier auch nicht davor zurück, die Standards hochzusetzen, denn dieser Ausbeutung müssen wir endlich ein Ende setzen!

**Mazaly Aguilar (ECR).** – Señor presidente, quisiera empezar esta intervención reconociendo la gran labor de los trabajadores temporeros del campo. Esta crisis nos ha recordado lo fundamentales que son. En España, según las organizaciones agrarias, no se han podido recoger cosechas de fruta por culpa del coronavirus. 100 000 puestos de estos trabajos no se han podido cubrir. Puestos de trabajo con arreglo a la ley.

Por eso me indigna que parte del Gobierno socialcomunista de mi nación, con una desinformación absoluta, acuse de esclavitud a los agricultores españoles. Esta acusación solo busca criminalizar y dañar la imagen de la agricultura ante la sociedad española, que la considera un ejemplo y un sector estratégico, sobre todo después de ver cómo ha evitado el desabastecimiento de nuestras tiendas y supermercados.

Y no podemos aceptar esta acusación y mucho menos viniendo de un Gobierno que, mientras morían 40 000 españoles —20 000 de ellos ancianos en su residencia sin apoyo hospitalario— y mientras se contagiaban 59 000 sanitarios y miles de policías y guardias civiles, les negaba las medidas más básicas de seguridad.

En lugar de acusar a nuestros agricultores, lo que el Gobierno debería hacer es pedir perdón. Si hay alguien que tiene derecho a acusar es, sin duda, el pueblo español a su inefable Gobierno.

**Chiara Gemma (NI).** – Signor Presidente, onorevoli colleghi, sappiamo bene che le misure adottate dagli Stati membri per contenere e combattere la diffusione del virus hanno provocato per i lavoratori transfrontalieri e stagionali pesantissime conseguenze negli Stati presso cui erano impiegati. Penso all'essersi trovati immediatamente e improvvisamente senza reddito, alloggio, trasporti, assistenza sanitaria.

Un pensiero particolare mi piace rivolgerlo ai lavoratori stagionali nel settore agricolo, spesso vittime di caporalato. Una piaga, purtroppo, assai diffusa nelle regioni del mio Sud Italia. Questa risoluzione rappresenta una risposta chiara e condivisibile, considerate le gravi problematiche subite da queste categorie di lavoratori.

Auspicio, allora, che la Commissione e gli Stati garantiscano piena tutela dei diritti, sanzionando qualsiasi discriminazione rivolta ai lavoratori, e che in sede di Consiglio vengano garantite risorse necessarie per rilanciare l'occupazione e protezione di sostegno nei confronti di lavoratori ed imprese penalizzate.

**Λουκάς Φουρλάς (PPE).** – Κύριε Πρόεδρε, κύριε Επίτροπε, όπως είπατε και εσείς προηγουμένως, η ελεύθερη κυκλοφορία των εργαζομένων αποτελεί θεμελιώδη αρχή της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης. Όταν μιλάμε για εποχιακούς εργάτες ή για εργαζομένους που διασχίζουν σύνορα για να πάνε στην εργασία τους, μιλάμε για ανθρώπους, για ανθρώπους με οικογένειες, με ανάγκες, που εξαρτώνται από το μισθό τους, για ανθρώπους που αυτή τη στιγμή μας παρακολουθούν με την προσδοκία ότι, ως Ευρωπαϊκό Κοινοβούλιο, ως Ευρώπη, θα κάνουμε ό,τι είναι δυνατό για να τους προστατεύσουμε. Ο ρόλος ο δικός μας εδώ σήμερα είναι να τους δώσουμε το μήνυμα ότι κατανοούμε τις ανάγκες τους, ότι φροντίζουμε να εξασφαλίσουμε τις εργασίες τους, να τους προστατεύσουμε, ότι στεκόμαστε δίπλα τους και όχι απέναντί τους. Αυτό το μήνυμα πρέπει να σταλεί σήμερα από αυτή την αίθουσα.

**Marc Angel (S&D).** – Monsieur le Président, la crise de la COVID-19 a mis en lumière un ensemble d'abus et de problèmes structurels liés à la mobilité des travailleurs en Europe.

Je salue la résolution qui met les employeurs, les États membres et l'Europe face à leurs responsabilités. Du côté des employeurs, on constate trop d'abus et d'exploitation des travailleurs saisonniers avant tout. Du côté des États membres, les services publics sont affaiblis en raison de l'austérité et cela a rendu les services d'inspection sociale et du travail inefficaces. Enfin, du côté de l'Europe, plusieurs bonnes recommandations ont été publiées tout au long de la crise, mais quid de leur suivi par les États membres, quid du respect de la législation européenne et nationale en matière de mobilité des travailleurs?

Nous, socialistes, exigeons plus de transparence. Nous encourageons la Commission à continuer à analyser l'impact des mesures prises à la suite de la fermeture des frontières et le respect des droits sociaux et fiscaux des travailleurs, et nous espérons que les conclusions aboutiront à un plan d'action incluant les dispositions législatives.

Enfin, j'aimerais, au nom du groupe socialiste et démocrate, remercier les nombreuses associations et les ONG ainsi que les partenaires sociaux pour leur précieuse aide d'urgence accordée aux travailleurs tout au long de cette crise.

**Dominique Bilde (ID).** – Monsieur le Président, l'épidémie de COVID-19, vous le savez, a porté un coup de massue à l'économie de notre continent. Au sein de ce marasme généralisé, je prends aujourd'hui la parole pour défendre notre jeunesse. Dans un pays comme la France, qui prévoit un million de chômeurs, nos étudiants, nos jeunes diplômés connaissent de très graves difficultés.

Combien de jeunes ne parviendront pas à trouver de job d'été pour leur permettre de vivre le reste de l'année? Combien d'étudiants de trouveront pas de stage pour valider leur diplôme? Combien de jeunes diplômés termineront leurs études et chercheront, non plus des mois, mais des années avant de trouver un emploi dans leur domaine? Combien de jeunes, en général, rêvent de partir de ce continent pour un avenir meilleur?

Pendant ce temps, l'Union européenne nous impose de laisser, de respecter les plus viles règles de libre-échangeisme mondialiste, de laisser entrer dans notre pays des dizaines de milliers de travailleurs détachés, de laisser entrer encore plus de migrants économiques, à qui on donne la priorité sur l'emploi.

Avant que l'Union européenne, et sa Commission, nous réimpose son insupportable doctrine, pensez à notre jeunesse, pensez à nos étudiants, pensez à nos diplômés. L'histoire qu'on retiendra de cette assemblée, ce sont...

*(Le Président retire la parole à l'oratrice)*

**Rasmus Andresen (Verts/ALE).** – Herr Präsident! Der Mann war Mitte fünfzig, er kam aus Rumänien. Er ist am Fließband zusammengebrochen, die Vorarbeiter haben ihn beschimpft, warum er da am Boden rumliege. Acht Kilometer musste er zu Fuß zu seiner Unterkunft laufen und allein einen Arzt suchen. Hier in Deutschland gibt es niemanden, der ihn unterstützt.

Über 17 Millionen Europäerinnen und Europäer sind *cross-border workers*: in der Landwirtschaft, in der Pflege, in Schlachthöfen, in Werften und als Reinigungskräfte. Viele von ihnen werden sehr schlecht bezahlt, haben keine soziale Absicherung und schlechten Gesundheitsschutz. Ihr Schicksal darf uns nicht nur dann interessieren, wenn das Coronavirus in deutschen Schlachthöfen ausbricht. Es ist skandalös, dass Menschen durch Unternehmen wie Tönnies oder Vion ausgebeutet werden.

Die deutsche Bundesregierung muss ihre Ratspräsidentschaft dazu nutzen, für die Rechte aller Menschen, aller EU-Arbeitnehmerinnen und —Arbeitnehmer einzustehen, und die EU-Kommission muss hinschauen und stärker für Arbeitnehmerinnen und Arbeitnehmer aktiv werden. Es ist gut, dass wir hier als Parlament mit dieser EntschlieÙung dafür den Anfang machen. Lassen Sie uns jetzt gemeinsam dafür sorgen, dass deren Lage verbessert wird!

**Anna Zalewska (ECR).** – Panie Przewodniczący! Koleżanki i Koledzy! Pandemia wyostrzyła czasami w sposób tragiczny to, o czym Parlament Europejski mówi od bardzo dawna. Zmienia się to oczywiście systematycznie, ale tam, gdzie było złe, było jeszcze gorzej. Jest to doskonała okazja, żeby dokonać analizy, wyciągnąć wnioski i dać rekomendacje. Jednocześnie my, parlamentarzyści europejscy, powinniśmy przyjąć sami na siebie zobowiązanie, żeby razem z koleżankami i kolegami w krajach członkowskich – bo przecież to kraje członkowskie odpowiadają, między innymi, za kontrolę firm, które niewłaściwie zabezpieczają pracowników – razem rozwiązywać problemy. Mam nadzieję, że prezydencja niemiecka będzie miała w swojej agendzie tego rodzaju spotkania ministrów rodziny, by móc sprawdzić, przeanalizować i przedstawić nam raport, który będzie wynikiem refleksji nad tym wszystkim, co wydarzyło się w ostatnich czasach.

**Gheorghe Falcă (PPE).** – Domnule președinte, dragi colegi, la șaisprezece ani reușeam la un examen școlar, iar familia mea, pentru a reuși să îmi cumpere o bicicletă, m-a trimis douăzeci și una de zile într-o muncă sezonieră. Am muncit atunci cu drag și cu gândul la bicicletă, fără să mă gândesc la ceea ce înseamnă securitatea mea. Astăzi văd lucrurile altfel.

Prin această rezoluție, invităm Comisia și statele membre să ia măsuri ca lucrătorii să beneficieze de protecție adecvată, prin îmbunătățirea condițiilor de muncă, prin respectarea standardelor de cazare, prin îmbunătățirea standardelor de sănătate și siguranță. În același timp, trebuie să crească responsabilitatea angajatorilor și a firmelor de recrutare în respectarea drepturilor lucrătorilor. Mulțumesc raportorului pentru că a luat în considerare șase puncte importante pe care le-am propus în numele delegației României a PPE.

**Pierfrancesco Majorino (S&D).** – Signor Presidente, onorevoli colleghi, la pandemia ha avuto un impatto terribile sulle nostre vite, ma non ha colpito tutti allo stesso modo. Ha infatti reso più estreme e brutali le condizioni di vita e di lavoro di chi già era ai margini del sistema di produzione, pur essendone parte indispensabile.



La condizione in cui oggi vivono migliaia di lavoratori stagionali e lavoratori migranti, in particolare nel settore agricolo, è assolutamente inaccettabile: sfruttati per una paga da fame, senza orari, senza diritti e, in tempo di Covid-19, senza quella tutela per la salute che deve essere garantita. Spesso schiavi invisibili sotto il quotidiano ricatto dei caporali, come è stato già ricordato. Rispetto a ciò servono risposte più forti, più rapide e più tempestive.

Il principio della parità di trattamento a parità di lavoro, che anche alcune normative europee sanciscono, deve essere applicato nelle normative nazionali, e servono controlli seri ed efficaci sia sulle condizioni materiali in cui queste persone vivono e lavorano, sia sulle catene di subappalto in cui il loro lavoro è inserito. Garantire i loro diritti vuol dire anche fermare il *dumping* sociale e quell'odiosa concorrenza ... *(il Presidente toglie la parola all'oratore)*

**Rosanna Conte (ID).** – Signor Presidente, onorevoli colleghi, c'è bisogno di ascoltare, ascoltare tutte quelle istanze che arrivano dai nostri lavoratori transfrontalieri e stagionali, allontanando i tentativi di regolarizzare gli immigrati regolari come è accaduto in Italia.

Se volessimo rispondere seriamente alle esigenze di manodopera delle nostre attività produttive, dovremmo dare priorità ai tanti cittadini disoccupati colpiti dalla crisi, magari valutando la possibilità di introdurre un sistema di voucher per regolamentare i lavori saltuari e abbattere così l'aggravio fiscale.

E qui mi riferisco anche a quei residenti che basano il proprio reddito sulle attività svolte solo in determinate stagioni. Penso, ad esempio, ai balneari, ai maestri di sci e a tutti gli operatori del settore turistico nelle zone costiere, come bagnini, camerieri, addetti alle pulizie. A tutti loro devono essere garantite condizioni di lavoro dignitose e regolate dai singoli Stati Membri. Solo così si darà una prospettiva concreta per uscire da questa crisi.

**Christian Sagartz (PPE).** – Herr Präsident, geschätzte Kolleginnen und Kollegen! Die COVID-19-Krise hat Berufspendler vor besondere Herausforderungen gestellt, und ich habe das besonders daran gemerkt, dass ich in einer Region lebe, wo für diese Berufspendler ganz besondere Bestimmungen gelten.

Ich komme aus dem Burgenland, einem Teil Österreichs, der sehr lange an der toten Grenze gelegen ist, wo man das Miteinander von allen Staaten zu schätzen weiß, dass die Nachbarschaft gelebt wird und dass Mitarbeiter mobil sind. Das hat eine ganz zentrale Bedeutung, insbesondere dort, wo man es in meiner Region besonders gespürt hat: im Gesundheits- und Pflegebereich.

Hier ist es heute wichtig, dass das Europäische Parlament ein klares Signal an diese mobilen Arbeitnehmer, an die Saisonarbeitskräfte schickt und hier gemeinsam ein Signal sendet, nämlich auch der Wertschätzung. Ich glaube – und das ist besonders wichtig –, dass viele Menschen Angst hatten in dem Moment, als Grenzen geschlossen wurden: Wo soll ich die nächsten Wochen und vielleicht Monate bleiben? Am Arbeitsplatz oder bei meiner Familie? Wir sind dankbar, dass hier sehr schnell in vielen Bereichen Abhilfe geschaffen wurde und dass heute ein klares Signal des Europäischen Parlaments erfolgt.

**Victor Negrescu (S&D).** – Domnule președinte, domnule comisar, dragi colegi, realizarea unei rezoluții comune a Parlamentului European este un pas important pentru asigurarea unor condiții mai bune pentru lucrătorii sezonieri și reprezintă, de fapt, un mesaj clar că nu vom tolera nicio formă de sclavie modernă. Se confirmă mesajele transmise de noi, social-democrației, privind existența unor grave probleme și încălcări ale legislației europene în materie de muncă și drepturi sociale.

În cazul României, chiar guvernul a pus în pericol sănătatea a sute de lucrători sezonieri, prin prisma unor decizii care nu au permis aplicarea legislației europene. Rezoluția preia soluțiile incluse în mesajele noastre repetate către instituțiile europene și naționale și aceste soluții sunt susținute de peste 50 000 de persoane care au semnat petiția noastră adresată instituțiilor europene.

Dar problema nu este rezolvată. Lucrătorii români care au ieșit în stradă, cei care au apelat la instanță, cei care au fost îngrămădiți în avioane și autocare au așteptări mari de la noi. Uniunea Europeană trebuie să protejeze toți lucrătorii și să intervină atunci când drepturile sociale au fost încălcate, așa cum s-a întâmplat în cazul lucrătorilor români.

**Silvia Sardone (ID).** – Signor Presidente, onorevoli colleghi, siamo qui a parlare dei lavoratori stagionali in emergenza Covid e quindi anche di gestione delle frontiere. Allora possiamo dirci la verità e raccontare, per esempio, quello che è successo in Italia. In questo periodo Covid ci sono stati migliaia di immigrati irregolari che sono sbarcati sulle nostre coste. Quindi diciamo che la gestione dei confini non è esattamente funzionata benissimo.

Ci sono stati costi spropositati per la quarantena: addirittura traghetti ad hoc e con tutti i comfort per gestire l'emergenza e, quindi, anche l'accoglienza. Ci sono stati traghetti ad hoc per la gestione dell'accoglienza. Nessuna solidarietà europea, nessun ricollocamento, nessuna gestione condivisa dell'accoglienza.

E poi sugli stagionali il governo che cosa ha fatto? Ha deciso di fare una bella sanatoria, con la scusa dell'emergenza degli stagionali nel comparto agricolo, con buona pace di tanti italiani in difficoltà e senza lavoro. Quindi diciamo un totale fallimento, sia per l'Italia, sia per l'Europa.

**Benoît Lutgen (PPE).** – Monsieur le Président, la crise de la COVID a montré ô combien les travailleurs saisonniers étaient importants pour subvenir aux besoins de l'alimentation de l'ensemble des citoyens européens.

Ces travailleurs méritent bien sûr notre respect, notre reconnaissance et, en ce sens, merci au rapporteur, merci à la contribution. Ça va dans le bon sens de leur protection et quelque part de leur sauvegarde, qui fait partie de l'ensemble du système agricole, entre guillemets.

Par rapport aux travailleurs frontaliers: près d'un travailleur frontalier sur deux dans ma région est frontalier. Je pense qu'il est important de pouvoir leur faciliter la vie en cas de crise. Il y a eu beaucoup de difficultés, notamment aux frontières.

On serait bien inspiré de produire peut-être au niveau européen une espèce de passeport travail-travailleurs frontaliers pour leur faciliter les contrôles, faciliter aussi la vie des entreprises qui ont dû multiplier les démarches administratives, et donc organiser cela, avec peut-être différents niveaux. On pourrait notamment donner un passeport 5 étoiles, si je puis dire, pour les travailleurs dans le domaine de la santé, qui traversent la frontière pour subvenir aux besoins de santé de part et d'autre de la frontière.

Travaillons sur cette proposition. Je pense qu'elle pourrait améliorer le sort de chacune et de chacun.

**Łukasz Kohut (S&D).** – Mr President, I have already spoken in this chamber about the need to protect the rights of frontier workers. During the session, we will vote on a very important resolution regarding their rights, the rights of cross-border and seasonal workers as well. By the way, I was one of them, for almost five years.

It is a good step, a step in the right direction. What must follow is concrete action by both the European Union and the Member States, both legislative and non-legislative, and particularly the provision of crucial information.

During the current crisis, they have failed to do so. To help frontier workers from my region in Silesia I had to open a cross-border information point in my office, simply because the public authorities were not there. This is not right. Societies are resilient, but far more so when properly informed.

Public authorities must provide accurate up to date and comprehensive information as a human right.

**Nicolas Schmit, membre de la Commission.** – Monsieur le Président, honorables députés, nous avons débattu cet après-midi d'un sujet important, d'un sujet qui va au cœur même de la construction européenne: c'est la libre circulation des travailleurs. C'est un grand atout, c'est une grande réalisation, mais c'est aussi une grande responsabilité.

Nous avons malheureusement, à la lumière de la crise actuelle, constaté ce que nous devinions peut-être auparavant, qu'il y avait aussi dans cette libre circulation des situations inacceptables, des conditions de travail non dignes, des conditions de vie et de logement inacceptables. Je crois que ce débat va nous aider à aborder, à résoudre plus efficacement, plus rapidement ces problèmes.

Ce n'est pas une solution, comme certains l'ont dit, de vouloir abroger la directive sur le détachement, parce que, si on appliquait cette directive-là, eh bien il n'y aurait pas ces situations scandaleuses. Et d'ailleurs, ce n'est pas la situation juridique qui pose problème, c'est sa non-application. C'est le fait que des contrôles sont absents ou insuffisants.

Donc, je crois que c'est un appel à tous, bien sûr aux employeurs, bien sûr aux États membres, d'appliquer le droit, d'appliquer les principes européens. Je crois que, si on fait cela, on aura progressé et on aura rétabli la dignité de tous ces travailleurs qui le méritent.

**Nikolina Brnjac**, *President-in-Office of the Council*. – Mr President, to conclude, I would like to reiterate the Council's support with regard to the free movement of seasonal and cross-border workers, but let me reiterate the conditions for this support, which are providing these workers with a safe working environment, social protection and equal treatment with national workers.

Member States are ready to debate these issues further, together with Parliament and the Commission, seeking the best solution to face the daunting challenges posed by COVID-19.

**Der Präsident**. – Vielen Dank, Frau Präsidentin Brnjac. Das war, wenn ich es richtig verstanden habe, Ihre letzte Intervention in Ihrer Funktion im Rahmen der kroatischen Ratspräsidentschaft. Ich bedanke mich für Ihre stete Präsenz. Ich wünsche Ihnen persönlich alles Gute und hoffe, dass wir uns gelegentlich auch mal wiedersehen. Vielen Dank.

Gemäß Artikel 132 Absatz 2 der Geschäftsordnung wurde ein Entschließungsantrag eingereicht.

Die Aussprache ist geschlossen.

Die Abstimmung findet am Freitag, 19. Juni 2020, statt.

Die Sitzung wird bis 18.15 Uhr unterbrochen.

(Die Sitzung wird um 16.34 Uhr unterbrochen.)

*Schriftliche Erklärungen (Artikel 171)*

**Асим Адемов (PPE)**, *в писмена форма*. – COVID-19 постави пред изпитание нормалното функциониране на веригата за доставка на храни. Селското стопанство като първо и най-уязвимо звено от тази верига почувства силен недостиг на сезонна работна ръка и то в период, когато вътрешните граници на Съюза бяха напълно затворени. Кризата изведе на преден план значението и незаменимата роля на „невидимите“ герои – сезонните работници, които най-често са от уязвими социални групи от Източна Европа. Новата ОСП и стратегията „От фермата до трапезата“ трябва да вземат предвид значението на селскостопанските и сезонни работници, които осигуряват храната на нашата трапеза. Те заслужават здравословни и безопасни условия на труд, справедливо заплащане и социална закрила, както и достъп до здравни услуги в държавите, в които временно пребивават. Много често тези работници стават жертва на злоупотреби от страна на недобросъвестни работодатели или посредници за намиране на временна заетост. В тази връзка е необходимо на сезонните работници да се гарантира прозрачен достъп до информация, на разбираем за тях език, относно трудовите договори, социалните и здравни права, подкрепата в случай на трудова злоупотреба, помощ за репатриране, както и наличните възможности за сигнализиране на злоупотреби и за получаване на подкрепа, без страх от репресии.

**Атидже Алиева-Вели (Renew)**, *в писмена форма*. – Пандемията оказа сериозно негативно влияние върху икономиката на Съюза и света като цяло. Не може да отречем обаче че някои сектори и работници бяха засегнати много по-тежко от други и това налага мерките за възстановяване и подкрепа да бъдат съобразени с трудностите и спецификите, които отделните сектори и работници изпитват. Сезонните и трансграничните работници срещат съществени затруднения, изискващи незабавни действия от страна ЕК и ДЧ, за да се окаже адекватна защита на хората, които гарантират продоволствената сигурност на Съюза, както и на тези ангажирани с предоставянето на стоки и услуги от основополагащо значение в основни икономически сектори. Приветствам обявените насоки от Комисията, считам обаче, че следва да се направи повече. Все още четем тревожни истории и чуваме за редица случаи, при които не се прилага принципът на равно третиране. Няма хармонизиран процес за сигнализиране на злоупотреби и проблеми, което ограничава възможността да се даде гласност на недопустими практики. Настоявам за подходяща защита от COVID-19 и от последиците, свързани с болестта, включително и лесен достъп до тестване. Призовавам всички държави да предприемат мерки, с които да се гарантира защитата на здравето и безопасността на работниците при пътуването им до съответното работно място, както и да им се осигуряват прилични жилищни условия, а Комисията следва да наблюдава и следи тяхното прилагане.

**Carmen Avram (S&D)**, *în scris*. – Problemele sezonierilor din Europa nu sunt noi. Vorbim despre ele periodic și, apoi, subiectul trece în plan secund, până la următoarea кризă. Nou e, însă, ceea ce s-a întâmplat în ultimele luni cu valul de мuncitori români, plecați, în plină пандемие, în necunoscut, pentru a мunci în condiții неclare, pe baza unor contracte абузиве, riscându-și сăнăтatea și viața. Сăптăмăни la rând am văzut în mass-media din România sute de măртurii despre ce au avut de îndurat.

A fost rezultatul unei фurtuni perfecte, provocată de un guvern foarte slab, de інтеlegeri билатералe неtransparente cu alte state – ceea ce subminează принципите UE – și индивизи și фирме care au încercat să profite de хаосul european, sperând că vor face bani ușор pe spatelа unor cetățeni disperati.

Salut această резолюție și contribuția адусă de S&D pe tema сезонierilor. Social-democrații trebuie să continue să privească динcolo de институții și să vadă mereu omul. Pentru că acest om are nevoie deseori de ajutor și de confortul de а ști că, деși сăраc, nu va fi дескалифиcат la градul de cetățean de мăна а doua și nici лăsat în urmă.

**Vilija Blinkevičiūtė (S&D)**, *raštu*. – Laisvas darbuotojų judėjimas yra darbuotojų teisė ir pagrindinis Europos Sąjungos principas, būtinas tinkamam vidaus rinkos veikimui. Darbo jėgos judumas turėtų būti ne tik laisvas, bet ir teisingas. SESV 45 straipsnio 2 dalyje įtvirtintas vienodo požiūrio principas, kuriuo uždraustas bet koks su įdarbinimu, darbo užmokesčiu ir kitomis darbo ir užimtumo sąlygomis susijęs darbuotojų iš valstybių narių diskriminavimas dėl pilietybės. Šis principas vienodai taikomas tarpvalstybiniams ir sezoniniams darbuotojams, kuriems turi būti užtikrintos vienodos sąlygos su darbuotojais, kurie yra priimančiosios valstybės narės piliečiai, pagal ES teisės aktus, tiek lygių teisių, tiek vienodų darbo sąlygų ar vienodos apsaugos atžvilgiais. Raginame Komisiją ir valstybes nares įgyvendinti priemones, siekiant užtikrinti, kad tarpvalstybiniams ir sezoniniams darbuotojams, tarpvalstybiniams verslininkams ir savarankiškai dirbantiems asmenims būtų suteikta tinkama apsauga nuo COVID-19 ir jos padarinių, įskaitant lengvą prieigą prie testų, ir kad jiems suprantama kalba būtų suteikta informacijos apie riziką bei saugumo priemones, kurių reikia imtis. Raginame įgyvendinti priemones, kad keliaujant būtų užtikrinta jų sveikata bei saugumas ir tinkamos būsto sąlygos, užtikrinant saugaus atstumo laikymąsi ne tik jų gyvenamojoje vietoje, bet ir darbo vietoje, taip pat su repatriacija susiję sprendimai, kurie nebūtų priimami darbuotojų nenaudai, jeigu tokių sprendimų prireiktų.

**Milan Brglez (S&D)**, *pisno*. – Razprava o evropskem varstvu čezmejnih in sezonskih delavcev v času krize zaradi covid-19 v eni točki povzema ključna vprašanja, s katerimi se Evropski parlament ukvarja na junijskem zasedanju, ter izzive za prihodnost EU.

Posebej zapleten in velikokrat pravno negotov položaj čezmejnih in sezonskih delavcev je z epidemijo covid-19 postal tema, ki zahteva urgentno reševanje za zaščito pravic ljudi in delovanje evropskega gospodarstva. Hkrati pa predstavlja neposreden dokaz o pomenu delujočega schengenskega sistema, v katerem ni notranjih meja in nadzorov.

Prost pretok ljudi je ena izmed štirih temeljnih svoboščin EU, pri čemer je aktualna kriza podkrepila dejstvo, da ta svoboščina nima pravega pomena, če se ne izvaja na pravičen način, v katerem so v ospredju pravice ljudi.

Dostojne zaposlitve v varnem in zdravem delovnem okolju, usklajevanje sistemov socialne varnosti, da nihče ne bi padel med reže razlik v zakonodajah držav članic, skrb za boljšo informiranost delavcev in ustrezen nadzor nad izvajanjem čezmejnega in sezonskega dela, pa tudi odprava pedsodkov ter zmanjševanje ekonomskih in socialnih razlik med in znotraj članic morajo postati teme na vrhu seznama prednostnih nalog EU.

Konferenca o prihodnosti EU ne more miniti brez tega, da bi dala odgovor na vprašanje, kako okrepi dolgo zapostavljeno socialno dimenzijo EU.

**Johan Danielsson (S&D),** *skriftlig.* – Säsongsarbetare och gränsöverskridande arbetare i Europa fräntas ofta sina rättigheter till likabehandling och arbetar många gånger med usla arbetsvillkor och undermålig arbetsmiljö. Detta måste få ett slut. Den här resolutionen är ett steg i rätt riktning. Och jag hoppas att kommissionen vidtar de förslagna åtgärderna. Särskilt akut är det att vi nu under den pågående pandemin får på plats ett systematiskt arbetsmiljöarbete som skyddar även de mest utsatta på arbetsmarknaden. Dock skulle jag, som socialdemokrat, hade önskat ännu tydligare krav på att EU-medel inte ska gå till oseriösa arbetsgivare. I min värld bör inte en enda euro gå till företag som använder EU:s friheter för att utnyttja medmänniskor. Arbetare ska känna sig trygga på sin arbetsplats och ha goda arbetsvillkor – oavsett anställningsform. Konsumenter ska veta att när de handlar något från EU så är det fritt från arbetsexploatering. Och seriösa företag ska veta att de inte riskerar att konkurreras ut av skurkföretag bara för att de följer lagar, regler och kollektivavtal. Jag kommer att fortsätta jobba för initiativ på både nationell nivå och EU-nivå som stärker villkoren för dessa utsatta arbetstagare.

**Ádám Kósa (PPE),** *írásban.* – A határt átlépő munkavállaló és idénymunkás nélkülözhetetlen szerepet töltenek be a kulcsfontosságú gazdasági ágazatokban és a vírus terjedésének megfékezésére és megelőzésére irányuló tagállami intézkedések – különösen a határlezárások, az ideiglenes korlátozások és a belső határellenőrzések – egyaránt súlyosan érintették őket. Fontos olyan intézkedéseket hozni, amelyek egészségük és biztonságuk védelmét szolgálják utazásuk során. Küzdeni kell az idénymunkásokról és a határt átlépő munkavállalókról alkotott negatív kép ellen is. Másrészt a munkáltatóknak is szükségük van egyértelmű szabályokra, a tagállamoknak pedig fel kell készülniük a Covid19 esetleges jövőbeli hullámaira. Ehhez szükség van arra is, hogy az Európai Bizottság iránymutatásokkal és megbízható adatokkal segítse a tagállamokat. Az erre irányuló javaslatokat messzemenően támogatjuk.

Ugyanakkor az állásfoglalás sajnálatos módon a határt átlépő és idénymunkások közé belekeverte a fogalmilag ide nem illő migráns munkavállalókat. A lehető leghatározottabban elutasítom, hogy a biztonságos, rendezett és szabályos migrációra vonatkozó 2018. évi globális megállapodásra legyen bármilyen hivatkozás, különösen annak 5. és 22. célkitűzésére. Mivel azonban az állásfoglalás célcsoportjának helyzetének javítása nagyon fontos, ezért tartózkodni fogok a végszavazás során.

**Dan-Ştefan Motreanu (PPE),** *în scris.* – Solicit Comisiei Europene să îşi exercite rolul de gardian al tratatelor şi să asigure implementarea principiului egalităţii de tratament prevăzut la articolul 45 alineatul (2) din Tratatul privind funcţionarea Uniunii Europene, care interzice orice discriminare pe motiv de cetăţenie între lucrătorii statelor membre în ceea ce priveşte încadrarea, remunerarea şi condiţiile de muncă.

Pandemia COVID-19 a scos la suprafaţă condiţiile absolut deplorabile în care majoritatea lucrătorilor sezonieri îşi desfăşoară activitatea în Europa anulului 2020, evidenţiind abuzuri precum nerespectarea standardelor de sănătate şi de siguranţă la locul de muncă, timpul exagerat de lucru, neasigurarea salariilor minime, condiţiile de cazare improprii şi practicile netransparente şi înşelătoare ale agenţilor de recrutare şi ale angajatorilor locali.

Invit Comisia Europeană să vină cu propuneri prin care să asigurăm că lucrătorii dispun de contracte de muncă clare înainte de plecare, să înfiinţeze un instrument care să le permită lucrătorilor să raporteze în mod anonim abuzurile şi să asigure organizarea continuă de inspecţii comune transfrontaliere la locurile de muncă.

**Evelyn Regner (S&D)**, *schriftlich*. – Die COVID-19-Krise hat die bereits vorher bestehenden katastrophalen Arbeits- und Lebensbedingungen von vielen Beschäftigten nochmal deutlich gemacht. Vor allem Saison- und LeiharbeiterInnen wie ErntehelferInnen und andere grenzüberschreitend tätige Menschen wie Pflegekräfte. Es darf nicht sein, dass günstige Preise mehr wert sind als die Gesundheit und Würde der Menschen, die Gemüse ernten oder im Schlachthof arbeiten. Mit verstärkten Kontrollen, gemeinsamen europäischen Mindeststandards und einer Europäischen Sozialversicherungsnummer müssen wir endlich bessere Arbeitsbedingungen schaffen. Auch in den langfristigen Plänen der EU-Kommission muss qualitative Arbeit und faire Entlohnung eine wichtige Rolle spielen. Ein soziales Europa muss auf alle Beschäftigten schauen, unabhängig von ihrer Herkunft. Es ist höchste Zeit, dass wir der Ausbeutung von Saisonkräften ein Ende setzen und den SystemerhalterInnen nicht nur Respekt und Applaus geben, sondern vor allem eine gute Entlohnung und menschenwürdige Arbeitsbedingungen!

**PRESIDÊNCIA: PEDRO SILVA PEREIRA**

*Vice-Presidente*

**15. Wznowienie posiedzenia**

*(A sessão tem início às 18h19)*

**16. Zmiana porządku obrad: patrz protokół**

**17. Ogłoszenie wyników głosowania**

**Presidente.** – Passo agora ao anúncio dos resultados do segundo período de votação que realizámos.

*(O Presidente anuncia o resultado das votações do segundo período de votações.)*

Passamos agora ao terceiro período de votação, mas, antes de começarmos, quero dar a palavra à nossa colega Hohlmeier que pediu para se pronunciar sobre a proposta de resolução sobre a reabertura do processo judicial contra o primeiro-ministro da República Checa por utilização indevida de fundos da União Europeia e potenciais conflitos de interesses (2019/2987(RSP)) (B9-0192/2020).

**Monika Hohlmeier (PPE).** – Herr Präsident, liebe Kolleginnen und Kollegen! Gleich werden wir über den Entschließungsantrag zur Wiederaufnahme der Ermittlungen gegen den Ministerpräsidenten der Tschechischen Republik aufgrund der missbräuchlichen Verwendung von EU-Mitteln und potenzieller Interessenkonflikte abstimmen.

Dieser Antrag wurde fraktionsübergreifend erarbeitet und stützt sich unter anderem auf Erkenntnisse der CONT-Dienstreise nach Tschechien. Dort haben sich unsere Sorgen erhärtet, dass in Tschechien kein funktionierendes System zur Vermeidung und Aufdeckung von Interessenkonflikten besteht. Systematische oder systemische Intransparenz und eine weitverzweigte Aufteilung an Zuständigkeiten erschweren eine effektive Kontrolle und Vermeidung von Interessenkonflikten enorm.

Zudem scheint die höchste Prüfbehörde in ihrer Arbeit stark eingeschränkt zu sein. Die Freiheit der Medien wird zunehmend problematischer, und auf Beamte wird Druck ausgeübt. Die Kernbotschaft des Entschließungsantrags lautet: Sollte ein schwerwiegender Interessenkonflikt bestätigt werden, muss er umgehend gelöst werden.

Hierzu bestehen im Grunde drei Möglichkeiten: Beseitigung des wirtschaftlichen Interesses, Ende des Bezugs von Subventionen oder Enthaltung bei Entscheidungen, die in irgendeiner Weise den Interessenkonflikt befördern können. Sollte dies nicht möglich sein, bleibt in der Konsequenz nur noch ein Rücktritt vom Amt.

Ich empfehle daher, bei allen getrennten und gesonderten Abstimmungen mit „Plus“ abzustimmen, um die klare Botschaft des Antrags nicht zu schwächen. EU-Subventionen sollen der breiten Mehrheit der Bevölkerung zugutekommen, nicht einzelne Oligarchen bereichern.

## **18. Trzecia część głosowania**

**Presidente.** – Estamos agora em condições de iniciar o terceiro período de votação de hoje.

Este período de votação está, portanto, aberto e prolonga-se até às 19h45.

A votação é feita segundo o mesmo procedimento utilizado nas votações anteriores.

Os resultados deste terceiro período de votação serão anunciados às 22h15.

*(A sessão é suspensa às 18h38).*

**PRESIDENZA DELL'ON. FABIO MASSIMO CASTALDO**

*Vicepresidente*

## **19. Wznowienie posiedzenia**

*(La seduta è ripresa alle 22.16)*

## **20. Ogłoszenie wyników głosowania: patrz protokół**

## **21. Wyjaśnienia dotyczące sposobu głosowania: patrz protokół**

## **22. Korekty do głosowania i zamiar głosowania: patrz protokół**

## **23. Składanie dokumentów: patrz protokół**

## **24. Przesunięcia środków i decyzje budżetowe: patrz protokół**

## **25. Petycje: patrz protokół**

## **26. Porządek obrad następnego posiedzenia: patrz protokół**

**27. Zamknięcie posiedzenia**

*(La seduta è tolta alle 22.20)*

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*Skróty i symbole*

*	Procedura konsultacji
***	Procedura zgody
***I	Zwykła procedura ustawodawcza, pierwsze czytanie
***II	Zwykła procedura ustawodawcza, drugie czytanie
***III	Zwykła procedura ustawodawcza, trzecie czytanie

(Typ procedury zależy od podstawy prawnej zaproponowanej w danym projekcie aktu.)

*Rozwinięcia skrótów nazw komisji parlamentarnych*

AFET	Komisja Spraw Zagranicznych
DEVE	Komisja Rozwoju
INTA	Komisja Handlu Międzynarodowego
BUDG	Komisja Budżetowa
CONT	Komisja Kontroli Budżetowej
ECON	Komisja Gospodarcza i Monetarna
EMPL	Komisja Zatrudnienia i Spraw Socjalnych
ENVI	Komisja Środowiska Naturalnego, Zdrowia Publicznego i Bezpieczeństwa Żywności
ITRE	Komisja Przemysłu, Badań Naukowych i Energii
IMCO	Komisja Rynku Wewnętrznego i Ochrony Konsumentów
TRAN	Komisja Transportu i Turystyki
REGI	Komisja Rozwoju Regionalnego
AGRI	Komisja Rolnictwa i Obszarów Wiejskich
PECH	Komisja Rybołówstwa
CULT	Komisja Kultury i Edukacji
JURI	Komisja Prawna
LIBE	Komisja Wolności Obywatelskich, Sprawiedliwości i Spraw Wewnętrznych
AFCO	Komisja Spraw Konstytucyjnych
FEMM	Komisja Praw Kobiet i Równych Szans
PETI	Komisja Petycji
DROI	Podkomisja Praw Człowieka
SEDE	Podkomisja Bezpieczeństwa i Obrony

*Rozwinięcia skrótów nazw grup politycznych*

PPE	Grupa Europejskiej Partii Ludowej (Chrześcijańscy Demokraci)
S&D	Grupa Postępowego Sojuszu Socjalistów i Demokratów w Parlamencie Europejskim
Renew	Grupa Renew Europe
ID	Grupa Tożsamość i Demokracja
Verts/ALE	Grupa Zielonych/Wolne Przymierze Europejskie
ECR	Grupa Europejscy Konserwatyści i Reformatorzy
GUE/NGL	Grupa Zjednoczonej Lewicy Europejskiej/Nordycka Zielona Lewica
NI	Niezrzeszeni