



PLENARY FOCUS

14-17 SEPTEMBER 2020

PLENARY SESSION PRIORITIES

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ONLINE PRESS BRIEFING

European Parliament
Anna Polykovskaya,
PHS 0A50
TUE 15 SEP
14:00 CET

GUE/NGL PRESS BRIEFING

Journalists are welcome to question the GUE/NGL Co-presidents on issues they are covering. Physical & remote participation possible. For remote questions call VOXBOXEP on Skype + write your name & media outlet in the chat box.

Manon Aubry (France Insoumise, France - GUE/NGL Co-president)
Martin Schirdewan (Die Linke, Germany - GUE/NGL Co-president)



Manon Aubry - State of the EU

Debate: Wednesday. Preview with Manon and Martin on Facebook LIVE: Tuesday at 11h30

Even though words are never followed by actual decisions, the Commission has been clever in pretending that it is pushing a 'progressive' agenda. We do not want to hear yet another self-satisfactory State of the Union speech. Ursula von der Leyen needs to take action in order to respond to the challenges we are facing. Will the Commission back climate targets that will actually comply with the Paris agreement? Will it propose a binding timetable for new own resources in order to pay for the Recovery plan, so that we can have room for EU budgets on cohesion, climate and agriculture? Will the Commission do something for the migrants in Greece after the fire in Moria camp? We demand answers!



Martin Schirdewan - State of the EU

Debate: Wednesday. Preview with Manon and Martin on Facebook LIVE: Tuesday at 11h30

The fire at Moria and the terrible situation facing refugees are symptomatic of the failure of EU policies. The EU is falling apart rather than acting in solidarity. Human rights are being violated at Europe's external borders and democratic values are being trampled, even obliterated, by certain countries. In some cases, member states also appear to be closing their borders arbitrarily without consulting their neighbours. Ursula von der Leyen must therefore accept that she has failed in achieving any of her political aims: from the big announcements in the early days of her administration, to the expected billions in military budgets. If she wants to present genuine change and innovation at SOTEU every year, then the EU needs to have fundamentally different policies that will put citizens at the heart of efforts to tackle the challenges of today: digitalisation and climate protection with a social dimension.



Kostas Arvanitis - The fire at Moria camp

Debate: Thursday

Europe is legally and morally obliged to help the refugees in Moria. That remains our firm belief. These people are entitled not only to humanitarian relief, but also faster processing of their asylum applications. Above all, the EU must respect the legal framework that protects all those who are fleeing conflict and war.





Kostas Arvanitis - Rule of law & LGBTI rights in Poland

Debate: Monday, Vote: from Wednesday

We stand with all those in Poland who have been deprived of their basic freedoms and rights. We stand with all those in the judiciary who are facing persecution; journalists under attack; women and LGBTQI people who have to fight for their freedoms. Since 2016, the Polish government has systematically attacked these groups, and this reaffirms, time and time again, why we need a clear political response from the EU. Democracy, rule of law and fundamental rights should never be in doubt in our Union.



Martina Michels - Just Transition Fund

Vote: from Tuesday

With European regions having to grapple with structural changes to industries and the phasing-out of coal by 2030, the Just Transition Fund must serve as a symbol of European solidarity. However, it would be a sham if there were to be simultaneous funding for both climate-friendly structural changes as well as fossil fuel projects. EU money should be for the people, SMEs, regions and municipalities - not big businesses. Only member states with ambitious climate targets should receive their full share.



Georgios Georgiou - Turkish incursions in Eastern Mediterranean

Debate: Tuesday, Vote: from Wednesday

As the world struggles to deal with Covid-19, the Eastern Mediterranean is being ravaged by Turkey's provocative and illegal activities. We condemn Turkey's violation of UNCLOS, as well as violating the sovereign rights of Cyprus and Greece. Similarly, we condemn Ankara's plans for the illegal settlement of Varosha. Such escalations have undermined the prospects for political dialogue, and for the resumption of negotiations on the Cyprus problem. The EU must not turn a blind eye: Ankara must be called upon to immediately stop its actions.



Dimitrios Papadimoulis - Turkish incursions in Eastern Mediterranean

Debate: Tuesday, Vote: from Wednesday

By ignoring the EU's position, Turkey is deliberately raising tensions in the Mediterranean, threatening peace and stability. We have successfully requested to add this urgent issue to the plenary agenda, and the European Parliament's resolution must give Turkey a firm and clear message, including financial sanctions for its dangerous provocation and illegal activities that violate the sovereign rights of EU member states. Furthermore, we must look for diplomatic solutions and find ways to de-escalate. Dialogue must be opened, but it must be based on respect for international law.



Kateřina Konečná - Shortage of medicines

Vote: from Wednesday

Medicine shortages are nothing new, but the COVID-19 crisis has exacerbated the situation and brought it to public attention. This report calls on the Commission, member states and big pharma to drastically step up their efforts to ensure that citizens will not again be deprived of essential healthcare. Now, more than ever, there is an absolute need to deepen the cooperation between member states in healthcare, and to establish common rules that will prevent future shortages, once and for all.



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