

EUROPEAN ECONOMIC AREA

**JOINT PARLIAMENTARY  
COMMITTEE**

**26th MEETING**

**23 May 2006, Tromsø**

**RESOLUTIONS**

Adopted pursuant to Rules 11 and 13 of the Rules of Procedure,  
at the 26<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Joint Parliamentary Committee

in Tromsø, 23 May 2006

Resolution on *The Annual Report on the Functioning of the EEA Agreement in 2005*

Co-rapporteurs: Mr Franz HEEB (Progressive Citizen's Party,  
Liechtenstein)  
Ms Ewa HEDKVIST PETERSEN (PES, Sweden)

adopted unanimously

and

Resolution on *Europe's High North: Energy and Environmental issues*

Co-rapporteurs: Mr Svein Roald HANSEN (Labour Party, Norway)  
Mr Paul RUBIG (EPP-DE, Austria)

adopted unanimously

## **Resolution**

### **On the Annual Report on the Functioning of the EEA Agreement in 2005**

The Joint Parliamentary Committee of the European Economic Area:

- A. in accordance with its task laid out by the EEA Agreement (Article 95, paragraph 4),
- B. emphasising that the EEA EFTA States are not third countries in matters concerning the Internal Market, but full participants,
- C. mindful of the importance of maintaining homogeneity within the EEA,
- D. noting that the information and consultation process provided for by the EEA Agreement is an essential tool for the EFTA States for the shaping of common rules,
- E. recalling its resolution on the functioning of the EEA in 1994 (adopted 29 May 1995), in 1995 (adopted 3 June 1996), in 1996 (adopted 14 April 1997) in 1997 (adopted 25 May 1998), in 1999 (adopted 16 March 2000), in 2000 (adopted 24 May 2001), in 2001 (adopted 20 June 2002), in 2002 (adopted 20 May 2003), in 2003 (adopted 27 April 2004), and in 2004 (adopted 25 April 2005),
  - 1. welcomes the Annual Report of the EEA Joint Committee for 2005 and agrees with the general assessment that the EEA is functioning well;
  - 2. encourages the EEA Joint Committee to draft a more comprehensive and analytical report for 2006 taking major EU developments and horizontal policy issues into account when assessing the functioning of the Agreement, enabling the Report to be understood by a wider audience, which could enhance the democratic scrutiny of the functioning of the Agreement;
  - 3. appreciates the statement delivered by the President-in-office of the EEA Joint Committee at the 25<sup>th</sup> EEA JPC, following the JPC resolutions adopted at the 24<sup>th</sup> meeting of the EEA JPC concerning the functioning of the EEA Agreement in 2004;
  - 4. welcomes the relatively high number of Joint Committee Decisions incorporated into the EEA Agreement during 2005;
  - 5. welcomes the ratification of the EEA Enlargement Agreement of all Contracting Parties in 2005;
  - 6. welcomes the relatively low number of EU acts under consideration on the EFTA side, notes that it is slightly lower than in previous year, and calls on the relevant

- parties to explain what exactly constitute an acceptable timeframe for considering EU acts;
7. welcomes the Joint Committee's decisions adopted in 2005 on: the EEA EFTA participation in the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control; the Community action programme in the field of civil protection; EEA EFTA participation in the European Railway Agency (ERA); EEA EFTA participation in the European Network and Information Security Agency (ENISA); the revision of Protocol 4 regarding the inclusion of several Mediterranean partner countries in the European cumulation system; certain special provisions in the field of competition for liner shipping companies and technology transfer agreements; the second Internal Energy Market package covering electricity and gas, and cross-border trade in electricity; EEA EFTA participation in the eContentplus Programme; EEA participation in the Sixth Environmental Action Programme; key priority act in the European Commission's Financial Services Action Plan; and, regulations on international accounting standards and directive on takeover bids in the field of company law.
  8. regrets that the contracting parties have agreed not to pursue for the time being the incorporation of Regulation 733/2002 on .eu Top Level Domain and the incorporation of Regulation 2062/94 on the European Agency for Safety and Health at Work into the EEA Agreement;
  9. welcomes that Norway ranked number 4 out of the 28 EEA States when it comes to transposing EU legislation into national legal order and that EEA EFTA States in general match the average for the 25 EU States;
  10. expresses concern over the decrease in the number of EFTA comments on EC legislation which have been submitted to the EU side, and urges the EEA EFTA States to take actions with a view to enhanced participation in the EEA decision-shaping process at the earliest possible stage in the legislative process;
  11. welcomes EEA EFTA comments submitted on general, horizontal policy issues to Heads of States and Governments and EU presidencies;
  12. notes that the EEA EFTA side has expressed concern over the EU ban on the use of fishmeal in ruminant feed, is aware of the substantial economic interests involved and expresses its wish that the issue can be resolved in a timely manner;
  13. notes that the EEA EFTA side has expressed concern over the European Commission's decision to open safeguard investigations on farmed salmon and calls on the relevant authorities to provide more information on this decision;
  14. welcomes that good progress was made on EEA EFTA participation in the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA), takes note of that this process has taken some time as participation is linked to the review of Chapter I of Annex I

- Veterinary Issues for Iceland, and urges the contracting parties to make provisions for an early EEA EFTA participation in EFSA;
15. expresses its concern over that the European Union Greenhouse Gas Emission Trading Scheme has still not been incorporated into the EEA Agreement;
  16. notes the increased role of agencies in the EU, underlines the need for EEA EFTA participation in EU agencies dealing with all matters covered by the EEA Agreement and welcomes the participation of the EEA EFTA States in the European Railway Agency (ERA) and in the European Network and Information Security Agency (ENISA);
  17. welcomes the findings of the EEA EFTA States' overview of the actual participation of EEA EFTA experts in the European Commission's committees and working groups and suggests that the survey be updated annually hereafter;
  18. welcomes the substantial contribution of the EEA EFTA States to the reduction of social and economic disparities and the high interest in the EEA Grants in beneficiary states and expresses the wish that a contribution will be continued;
  19. calls on the EEA EFTA States to pursue the objectives of the Lisbon Strategy in line with the EU Member States;
  20. calls on the EEA EFTA States to continue to pursue close monitoring of the Better Regulation Initiative as this policy could have important repercussions for the EEA EFTA States.
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## **Resolution**

### **On Europe's High North: Energy and Environmental issues**

The EEA Joint Parliamentary Committee of the European Economic Area:

- A. Recognising the new opportunities in petroleum exploitation in the High North – Barents Sea area that may potentially become one of Europe's most important petroleum sources in the not too distant future
- B. Recognising that the opportunities in the High North – Barents Sea area do pose imperative questions as to the major challenges of combining petroleum production with protection of the vulnerable marine environment
- C. Having regard to the current Second Northern Dimension Action Plan 2004-2006 (NDAPII) as endorsed by the European Council held in Brussels on 16 and 17 October 2003
- D. Having regard to the Northern Dimension Ministerial Conference in Brussels 20 November 2005 where the Foreign Affairs Ministers of the EU Member States, Iceland, Norway and Russia agreed on political guidelines for the future of the Northern Dimension
- E. Having regard to the European Commission's Green paper on a European strategy for sustainable, competitive and secure energy, on 8 March 2006 and the EU Presidency Council Conclusions on 23-24 March 2006
- F. Having regard to the Norwegian Government Paper: Opportunities and Challenges in the North 2005
  - 1. emphasises that the prospects of offshore petroleum activities in the High North – Barents Sea area underscore the importance of cooperation between the main actors involved as concerns environmental, energy security and availability, infrastructure, innovation and competitiveness as well as financing criteria for exploitation and management of the natural resources;
  - 2. stresses that the Arctic environment in general is a vital source of renewable and non-renewable natural resources which are of utmost importance not only for the nations and peoples in the area, but for Europe as a whole, including the European Economic Area;
  - 3. calls on relevant authorities to ensure that the exploitation of resources and the management of the marine environment in the High North – Barents Sea area is done in an environmentally sound and sustainable manner;

4. stresses that whilst natural resources extraction in the Arctic in general and more specifically the High North – Barents Sea could go on for many generations the resources are limited;
5. welcomes Russia's continued close cooperation with Norway, the EU and other partners in efforts to deal with the serious environmental problems that persist in North-west Russia.;
6. welcomes the Norwegian government's policy on the 'High North' and its intensified efforts to ensure the sustainable management of the area's rich natural resources such as the new coordinated system for monitoring the marine eco-system in the High North – Barents Sea area;
7. emphasises that the eco-system in the High North – Barents Sea area is vulnerable to pollution, over-exploitation and developmental strains and is under pressure as a result of not only the growing utilisation of natural resources but also long term pollution and climate change which has an intense affect on the Arctic in general;
8. underlines the importance of the Water Framework Directive, the Air Quality Directives, the IPPC directive and the Sixth Environmental Action programme and its Thematic Strategies for reducing the negative impact of pollutants in the Arctic environment;
9. calls on relevant authorities to evaluate, ratify, conclude and implement global environmental agreements such as the Kyoto Protocol, the Stockholm Convention on POPs, and the UN ECE LRTAP protocols on Heavy Metals and POPs;
10. calls on the parties to the Northern Dimension to agree on a clear cut, visible and dynamic policy, with strong political commitment by all partners that should reach beyond Europe to include the USA and Canada;
11. welcomes the shift in the Northern Dimension towards making it a regional expression in the North of the EU-Russia cooperation (PCA) and the "Four Common Spaces" and calls on the relevant authorities to create appropriate arrangements to link Iceland and Norway to this context, respecting the EEA Agreement;
12. calls on the establishment of a Northern Dimension partnership in energy where the focus is on sustainable development of existing natural resources, energy efficiency and renewable energy resources, where all Northern Dimension partners have a role to play;

13. calls on the Commission in future reviews of the Norwegian and EEA financial mechanisms to have regard to the possibilities of linkage between these contributions and the funding of the Northern Dimension;
  14. calls on relevant authorities to improve cooperation and coordination between existing bodies for regional cooperation in the Northern and Arctic regions so that they are more directly linked to the Northern Dimension policy;
  15. welcomes the steps being taken within the European Parliament to host a first meeting of a Northern Dimension Parliamentary Forum to take place in the autumn of this year 2006 so bringing together for the first time all the stakeholders and elected representatives from the Northern Dimension partners;
  16. stresses that the establishment of a Northern Dimension forum would substantially raise the profile of the ND, strengthen its foundations and provide a vehicle to increase co-ordination between the existing regional organisations in the Northern and Arctic regions and the EU and EEA institutions,
  17. notes with concern that EU's import dependency is rising and unless the EU Member States make energy more competitive within the next decades, around 70% of the Union's energy requirements will be met by imports, compared to 50% today;
  18. welcomes the European Commission's calls for a European strategy for sustainable, competitive and secure energy which will inevitably affect the High North – Barents Sea area;
  19. welcomes that High North – Baltic Sea nations Russia and Norway are specifically mentioned as strategic partners in the European Commission Green paper on a European strategy for sustainable, competitive and secure energy;
  20. stresses that a European strategy for sustainable, competitive and secure energy will also pose pertinent questions as to the EEA relevance of an internal energy market;
  21. urges the EEA EFTA Member States to reflect upon the consequences if the European Commission extends the internal energy market to new third countries or develops closer cooperation in the field of energy.
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