



Successes of the Greens in the European Parliament



The Greens | EFA
in the European Parliament

1999 – 2004

GREEN/EFA GROUP SUCCESSIONS IN THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT 1999 – 2004

In this document you will find an overview of the Green Group's initiatives and achievements in the committees of the European Parliament over the last five years. As you can see, despite our relatively modest size – with 45 MEPs out of a total of 626 – our input has been important and covers all of Parliament's legislative areas. This summary is not exhaustive, rather it is intended to give you some ideas and examples that you can investigate further. The mention of reports by name should also help you in this regard.

Please do not hesitate to contact us should you require any further details. We would be happy to provide you with any information about our legislative successes that you may need.

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Co Secretary-General of the Green/EFA Group
Brussels, 16 April 2004

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Environment and Health

Within the framework of the implementation of the Kyoto Protocol, the contribution of the Green/EFA Group was decisive for the adoption of a binding and ambitious emissions trading scheme covering 50% of CO₂ emissions in Europe. This system does not allow sectorial 'opt-outs' and imposes a cap at national level, which must be compatible with the national CO₂ reduction obligations agreed at European level.

In order to encourage the producers of electrical and electronic equipment to move towards eco-design, the Greens succeeded in establishing individual producer responsibility for the financing of the treatment of this equipment at the end of its life.

Concerning the quality of water, the Greens managed to insert into the Water Framework Directive the objective of phasing out emissions, discharges and losses of "priority hazardous substances" within 20 years.

In the revision of the legislative framework on pharmaceutical products, the Green/EFA Group succeeded in having the proposals for publicity on the part of the pharmaceutical industry deleted. The Group also achieved greater transparency on the authorisation procedures for medicines by improving the public's access to information. The Green/EFA Group equally succeeded in reducing the duration of "data protection" for medicines in order to accelerate market access for generic medicines.

As regards chemicals, the Green/EFA Group managed to strengthen several specific Directives. Amongst other things the Greens obtained: a ban on the use of substances that are carcinogenic, mutagenic or toxic to reproduction in cosmetic products; the prohibition of certain heavy metals and certain brominated flame retardants in electrical and electronic equipment; and the neutralisation of chromium VI in cement to end a primary cause for allergic dermatitis.

The Green/EFA Group obtained the support of the EP for a strengthened revision of the entire package of chemicals legislation (the Schörling report).

In order to obtain better air quality, especially in terms of SO₂, the Greens have been working for several years for the improvement of the fuel quality both for cars and ships.

Food security

Besides achieving a ban on feeding meat and bone meals, the Greens contributed to the development of new rules on the handling and processing of animal by-products.

The only four remaining antibiotics still authorised in animal feed for prophylactic purposes and growth acceleration will be prohibited from 2006. The prohibition of these antibiotics on the basis of the precaution principle remains an important political success of the Green/EFA Group despite some exemptions in the poultry sector.

The Paul Lannoye report and the Van Brempt report on pesticides are also successes for the Greens. Both include essential points, including the call for the creation of a legally binding EU-wide pesticides passport. In this passport, the producer will have to indicate the use of all pesticides in agriculture in order to facilitate appropriate food controls and labelling.

In order to guarantee greater transparency and make parliamentary control possible, the Green/EFA Group also obtained the publication on the Internet of the rapid alert system which warns about food risks connected with residues in European food.

The Green/EFA Group managed to secure a majority for the adoption of Hiltrud Breyer's report on food irradiation. The report supports a prudent approach towards this doubtful technology that might be used to mask hygiene-related shortcomings in food production and processing.

The Council and the Commission finally accepted the open declaration of compound foodstuffs, which was supported by the Greens. This declaration at last enables the farmers to know exactly what they are feeding their cattle with. (Friedrich-Wilhelm Graefe zu Baringdorf report).

Genetically modified organisms

The Green/EFA Group was a key player in the adoption of the existing European legislation regarding the authorisation, traceability and labelling of GMOs and GM products. Since 2003 all GM food and feed has to undergo a pre-marketing authorisation procedure ensuring that no negative impacts on the environment or human/animal health exists.

Thanks to this Green initiative, and against the will of the European Commission, the EU adopted in 2003 rules regarding exports of GMOs to non Member States. These rules go far beyond the Union's obligations under international law.

On the basis of a Green initiative the new regulation also requires Member States to prevent unintentional transboundary movements of GMOs to other countries.

In July 2003 several Green legislative and political initiatives gave rise to an amendment to the legislation on food and feed which enables Member States to take anti-pollution measures in order to ensure coexistence between conventional, organic and genetically modified farming.

The continuation of the moratorium (since October 1998), impeding the issuing of any marketing licenses for new GMOs, has been a major success for the Green/EFA Group.

The Greens strongly contributed to the adoption of an amendment on the deliberate release Directive that requires the listing of all sites cultivating GMOs in a public register. As recently acknowledged by the Commission recommendation on the guidelines for co-existence, this registration requirement is absolutely crucial in order to implement any co-existence measures.

At our initiative, a Resolution, (Friedrich-Wilhelm Graefe zu Baringdorf report) related to co-existence between GMO and non-GMO farming, was adopted with a strong parliamentary majority in December 2003. This Resolution requires the European Commission to fix reliable and technically measurable labelling thresholds for seeds containing traces of GMOs at the lowest scientific level as possible. This Resolution considers that the Community rules on coexistence ought to provide Member States with an opportunity to completely ban GMOs in geographically limited areas in order to guarantee co-existence.

Lastly, the resolution requests the European Commission to submit a proposal concerning civil liability at the Community level and insurance against possible financial losses connected with coexistence.

Agriculture

Many years of work have led the Green/EFA Group to finally succeed in introducing into the Convention the co-decision procedure in common agricultural and fishing policies related to framework laws establishing common organisation of the markets.

The Green/EFA Group achieved the introduction of an EU programme for the conservation and utilisation of traditional and regionally adapted plant varieties and animal races. By creating a budget line through the Parliament's agriculture and budget affairs committees MEPs obliged the Commission to create a legislative basis for this programme in favour of the conservation of biodiversity in agriculture. In order to halt biodiversity loss by 2010 the

Green/EFA Group obtained the support of the European Parliament to repeatedly demand for the integration of a biodiversity indicator into the annual analysis on the evolution of sustainable development (biodiversity action plans, Isler Béguin report).

The Green/EFA Group substantially contributed to the creation of a constructive compromise at EP and Council level on the midterm revision of the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP). This compromise introduced the principle of decoupling from production, but also enabled Member States to shape reform according to their regional needs and to redistribute production rights and single payments between regions and producers.

In the framework of the WTO, and in relation to CAP reform, the Greens succeeded in including the concept of "qualified external protection" into an EP resolution on agricultural negotiations. For imports into the EU this means the introduction of socio-economic and ecological conditions that control and prevent dumping. On the other hand qualified external protection allows the support of integrated rural development in developing countries based on a fund which uses the money created by the anti-dumping levies.

The Greens launched campaigns and created several networks on biological diversity and rural development, especially with the Central and Eastern European countries:

The Greens have substantially strengthened the EU regulation on organic farming, both at budgetary and control and certification level.

The EU-Action Programme for organic farming recently launched by the European Commission also comes as a result of intensive Green lobbying efforts.

Fishing

The Greens reduced EU support for pirate fishing by stopping subsidies for the export of fishing vessels to "flag of convenience" countries, where no rules apply. The Green/EFA Group also pushed the European Commission into adopting an action plan against pirate fishing, and provoked a split in the European fishing industry.

In collaboration with European Green Ministers, the Group increased political awareness of the damage caused by European fishing fleets in developing countries and pressured the European Union into improving its fisheries agreements. A split is now apparent between countries that want to fish at all costs and countries trying to improve conservation.

Energy

The Greens have made a genuine difference to the Directive on electricity from renewable energy sources. We can cite two major steps forward:

Member States must define national indicative targets in such way as to ensure that in the year 2010 the EU generates 22% of its electricity from renewable energy sources (as opposed to 14% in 1997);

Member States may choose their own support schemes for renewable energy. This is definitely a victory over the European Commission, which wanted to impose a single, uniform support mechanism for all in the form of 'green certificates.'

The Greens had the merit of launching the debate on the future of Euratom and nuclear energy in Europe. At the final meeting of the Convention, a Green proposal aimed at the abolition and the exclusion of the Euratom Treaty from the Constitution was adopted. Euratom was endowed with a separate legal personality ("The adopted proposal guarantees to Member States the right to withdraw from the Euratom Treaty without this having effects on their EU membership...").

Nevertheless, a status quo is noted on the principles of the Euratom Treaty. The Green/EFA Group required the convening of a conference on the Treaty revision with a view to repealing its obsolete provisions, in particular those concerning the promotion of nuclear energy and the lack of democratic decisional procedures.

With the Turmes Report on the liberalisation of the electricity market, the Greens contributed to the incorporation of several important aspects into the Directive:

That electricity bills and other promotional material provided by electricity suppliers must at least specify the energy mix (the proportion of coal, nuclear and gas power and renewable energy) used by the supplier in question over the past year. Moreover, consumers, whether industrial or private, can check the quantity of CO₂ and radioactive waste each supplier produces on their web site. In a liberalised market, the customer will, therefore, have the right to choose their supplier and consequently the right to reduce the environmental impact if they so wish.

The Greens highlighted the issue of utility companies' access to nuclear decommissioning funds and the subsequent actual or possible use of these funds to finance market acquisitions. In some Member States nuclear operators retain control of the funds they must set aside for decommissioning and waste management, while in others, the funds are managed by separate legal entities. Therefore, decommissioning funds may be used by the utility for investment – a clear market distortion.

Finally, thanks to the Greens, the three European Institutions underlined together in an inter-institutional statement the need for Member States to ensure that adequate financial resources for decommissioning and waste management activities are actually used to this end and are managed in transparent way, thus avoiding obstacles to fair competition in the energy market.

In a statement made to the EP, the European Commission finally acknowledged that decommissioning funds must come under Community legislation. In other words, they must also respect competition law under the EC Treaty.

Regional policy and Transport

The Greens obtained the setting up of a temporary committee of inquiry on the Prestige

The application of the water framework directive and its implication on the Structural Funds in relation to the Spanish Hydrological Plan shows a significant and coherent Green approach to the use of water resources and how to adjust economic development to sustainable water and natural resources. One concrete result was that the Greens succeeded in halting the financing of the Spanish hydrological plan.

The Greens obtained from the European Commission a more rigorous control respecting clear compliance of Natura 2000 in Structural funds operations.

Following the Green conference on "Natura 2000" (December 2002), the Greens obtained the support of the European Commission for the creation of a European Observatory on nature conservation and the setting up of the Natura 2000 Network, that is currently being launched.

Regarding the sixth framework programme on research and development, the Green/EFA Group designed and formulated the basic text for the section on 'sustainable surface transport' *with an allocated budget of €610m*. At present, this text is used for several projects on interoperability, intermodality, safety and sustainability in transport and mobility.

On the subject of air transport and the environment, the Green/EFA Group wrote an own-initiative report focusing on airport policy and effects, such as noise. The Group's proposals concerning the overall effects of this type of transport and the principle of the real costs for air transport were adopted. The European Commission has, however, continued to postpone its follow-up to this question.

The Greens also wrote an initiative Report on transport and health and as a result the EP adopted two instruments: "the assessment of transport decision/project's impact on health" and "the promotion of walking/cycling favourable to health."

Thanks to the Green/EFA Group, the EP rejected a directive on the liberalisation of the services at seaports in its third reading. This was an exceptional success.

Considering the revision of the TENs guidelines, the Greens obtained the application of strategic environmental impact assessments for all big infrastructure schemes. Then, at first reading, the Greens succeeded in gaining approval for an amendment rejecting the project for a bridge on the Messina Strait.

The Greens succeeded in having the principle of the environmental and social external costs included for Eurovignette – the tax on the lorries for the use of the infrastructures.

Concerning mobility management within the EP, the Greens – with the support of the ELDR Group – obtained the drafting of a transport plan for the MEPs, staff and visitors to the Parliament. This plan still has to be improved and the Greens are considering further new actions.

Convention

The last five years have can be characterised by an attempt to genuinely reform the European Union at both the institutional and political levels. These reforms have been prepared by two Conventions and have then been followed by two intergovernmental Conferences. The contribution of the Greens to this process was fundamental.

With regard to the democratisation of the Union, the green vision is often pioneering. The Greens were the first political force in place to use the term European democracy and this long before it became the slogan of the Convention on the future of Europe.

Regarding the reform of the Treaties, the essential fight of the Greens is aiming at a clear break from the intergovernmental method. Among the evidence of initial successes is that a Convention prepared the ongoing constitutional reform. But the Greens will continue fighting for the abolition of unanimity namely against the right of veto.

Thanks to the tireless requests of the Greens in the European Parliament and in the Convention, the Convention draft already shows fundamental institutional progress at the level of democracy and of the separation of powers. Some examples include: the citizens' will as a base of European integration, a legal personality, hierarchy of norms, no legislative power for the European Council, a legislative Council, the public nature of the European legislation and the insertion of the Charter of Fundamental Rights in the constitution draft.

With regards to the Convention, the Greens also intervened successfully at the level of: Euratom (see heading: Energy), the creation of a social working group (see heading: economic and social), the introduction of the concept of a civil peace corps and conflict prevention (see heading: Foreign Affairs, international Relations and Human rights), the adoption of the right of co-decision in the sector of agriculture (see heading: Agriculture), and the preemptory integration of sustainable development within the Convention texts.

Enlargement

The major Green achievements related to the reports on enlargement are:

The recognition of human and minority rights – particularly for the Roma and Sinti communities – as a European issue.

The integration of the social dimension in the EP's monitoring reports (*which was not sufficiently taken into account at the beginning of the legislature*).

The defence of women's rights and equal opportunities on a systemic basis which, thanks to the perseverance of the Greens, was taken into greater account in the progress reports. (Women's under-representation in politics, their over-representation in unemployment, extreme poverty especially among minorities, freedom of choice in family planning issues, etc.)

The need to develop a more human and less repressive EU asylum policy based on the principle of solidarity between old and new Member States.

Greens defended a conciliatory approach on the Benes Decrees.

The necessity for acceding countries to comply with environmental legislation before accession lead the Greens to put forward environmental questions at all negotiation phases and particularly concerning legislation on nature protection policy.

Respect by the new Member States of their commitments in the field of nuclear safety and dismantling as outlined in the Accession Treaty. The most important battles concern Ignalina (Lithuania), Bohunice (Slovakia), Kosloduy (Bulgaria), and the Melk agreements linked to the Temelin nuclear power plant in the Czech Republic (agreements between Austria and the Czech Republic). The Greens insisted on the fact that the EP has to be fully informed by the European Commission on the follow-up of this agreement.

Economic and social policy

On the basis of the Lambert report on the coordination of Social Security systems, the Council accepted Green requests and since 2003 third country nationals have also been included.

Within the framework of the Convention, a special working group on social policy was established on our initiative.

For several years the Greens insisted on full employment and quality jobs. Their request was finally heard and was taken into account in the Lisbon Strategy.

The Greens also succeeded in:

Making the European Parliament call for a rise of Europe-wide minimum thresholds for diesel tax for transport and for reconsidering unjustified tax exemptions. (Jonckheer report on the taxation of energy products)

Launching the first-ever Parliament report on the European Investment Bank (EIB) and requesting more transparency of this institution and increased political control of its projects (Lipietz report on the EIB).

Convincing the EP to push for a coordinated policy for investment in environmental technologies, including renewable energy, within the framework of the growth initiative initiated by the Presidency in 2003. (Randzio-Plath report on the preparation of the Broad Economic Policy Guidelines 2004).

Achieving majorities for Green/EFA amendments aimed at excluding the water sector from the EU's liberalisation strategies and strengthening the role of local and regional authorities regarding the management of services of general interest (Herzog report on services of general interest).

Including social and environmental criteria into the legal framework on public procurement with a view to ensuring a better balance between environmental policies and the principle of internal market (Zappala report on public procurement).

Public freedom and Justice

The EP adopted a report on family reunification and the free circulation of third country nationals which, on one hand, supported the Commission proposal, and on the other, intended to widen its scope (for example on the definition of the family and on the improvement of family members' statute – especially that of woman.)

Unfortunately, the Council did not follow the EP's position and limited the family reunification to the children (until the age of 12 years). Concerning this limitation, the Greens introducing an appeal to the European Court of Justice. The EP followed this initiative against the Council's Decision. The procedure is pending.

In addition, for the first time in the European history, and thanks to the intervention of the Greens, immigrants who have resided more than 5 years in the EU now have the same rights and freedom as the citizens of the Union. This right of abode enables them to circulate freely in the EU. In the past, when migrants residing in the EU were travelling towards another EU country these trips were regarded as movements from their country of origin.

One of the most important EP reports covers the Refugees' statute in the Union. This directive sets the basis of a common policy for refugees in the EU. Thanks to the Lambert report, the Greens succeeded in ensuring that the EP adopts a position that exceeds the Commission proposal by widening the scope of the directive to the refugees not covered by the 1951 Geneva Convention. (For example: by including the temporary refugees' protection). This directive is under discussion in the Council.

Thanks to the Green/EFA Group efforts and the Buitengeweg report, the EP adopted with great majority a position against racism and discrimination.

After initially being very isolated in the fight in favour of a democratic scrutiny of Europol, the Greens have gradually been joined by other political players. The European Commission published a green Paper on democratic scrutiny of Europol and The Council is officially studying this issue. In addition, the Convention on the future of Europe is advocating the 'communitarisation' of Europol. In other words, giving scrutiny powers to the EP and the Court of Justice.

Since the gradual process of establishing the European judicial area started, the Greens have been urging – the only ones to do so at first – that European judicial integration should go hand in hand with recognition of a common set of procedural safeguards, in particular concerning the rights of the defence. Our claims are growing in importance since the entry into force of the European arrest warrant (01.01.2004).

This campaign is starting to show positive results as the European Commission published a Green Paper on the issue aiming at creating an EU legislative instrument providing a common level of procedural safeguards.

The Green/EFA Group fought to obtain a level of personal data protection under the third pillar (police and judicial cooperation) at least equivalent to that in force under the first pillar (internal market).

This work finally seems to have been profitable and this can be attributed to several reasons: the many attempts to reduce safeguards have been stopped; the Presidency of the Council of Ministers recently tabled a proposal on harmonising the level of protection between the third and first pillars.

The Convention advocates either eliminating the third pillar entirely or integrating it into the first pillar. This would lead to the same result but also introduce 'a fly in the ointment', as the EU recently decided to authorise telecommunication service providers to retain data for a determined period of time.

Under a Green initiative in 2000, an EP temporary committee was set up on the Echelon system (*general global surveillance system, operated by the USA with, among others, the assistance of the United Kingdom*). This committee confirmed fears about the existence of such a system. The Greens voted nevertheless against the committee's conclusions for the very reason that whilst confirming the existence of Echelon, the committee refused to draw the necessary political conclusions, in particular with regard to the infringement of European privacy legislation.

Development policy

On the subject of access to medicines for developing countries, the Greens achieved a first victory in October 2000 at the ACP-UE Parliamentary Assembly. A second victory followed in March 2001 with the vote on the Gemelli Report (free licences enabling developing countries to manufacture and market medicines in emergency situations).

The complaint lodged by 39 international pharmaceutical firms (European and American) against a South-African law of 1997 on cheap imports of generic medicines destined for AIDS victims received a great deal of media coverage. The EP, in March 2001, adopted an urgent resolution condemning the law and affirming the right to have access to medicines. In the face of international opposition the 39 pharmaceutical firms withdrew their complaint. But the fight at the level of the WTO is not yet won.

Concerning access to water in the developing countries, the Lannoye report calls for access to water to be recognised as a basic human right. This right, recently included in the International Pact on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, is opposed to privatisation which penalises the most deprived populations.

The report points out that in most EU countries, water distribution is the responsibility of the public authorities and calls on the Commission to withdraw its request for water to be privatised in developing countries in the General Agreement on Trade Service (GATS) negotiations. (Of the world's six billion people, almost 1.7 billion – including 60% of the African population – do not have access to drinking water. The situation is made even worse by intensive farming, the construction of huge dams, industrial pollution, deforestation, etc.)

With regard to GM food aid and farming as a solution to famine and malnutrition in the developing countries, the Greens are one of only two political parties to stand against GM export and farming.

Industry

The Greens have regularly and often successfully introduced and upheld amendments in favour of free software, in both the EU's budget and its research programme. The Green/EFA Group has also requested that the European Parliament migrates to free software.

Alongside renowned organisations in the free software community and numerous SMEs, the Greens were in the vanguard on the fight against software patents. The Green/EFA Group won the first round of the fight against the draft directive that aims at legalising software patents in the EU.

Concerned by the influence of electromagnetic waves on public health, the Greens obtained the inclusion of the precautionary principle in several texts.

The Green/EFA Group initiated the debate on the nanotechnologies – the manipulation of material at the scale of the nanometer (one billionth of a meter), which is at the scale of atoms and molecules.

Budget and budgetary control

It is on the basis of a green initiative that the refugee fund was safeguarded and henceforth its budget will even be more important (shared responsibilities for the Member States in order to improve the conditions of the refugees' reception).

Over the years, the comments introduced into the EU budget by the Greens have concretely lead to significant improvements in the consideration of human rights and conflict prevention.

It is also thanks to the Greens that a new proper budget line has been set up for the decommissioning of nuclear reactors.

On the basis of a Green proposal, the discharge of the EP for the year 2000 was postponed until specific reforms were complete. Currently, we can observe visible improvements on the inventory and an – albeit slow – improvement on how public procurement is implemented. Several Green amendments aimed at improving the EP's environmental work were adopted. In 2001 the Staes report strongly contributed towards pushing the reform forward.

The Green/EFA Group is practically the only political group to table amendments linked to environmental issues and the ecological and social impact of EU budgetary activity. For voters who see in the institutions a financial disaster, voting Green is the right option as we are asking for an analysis of the impact of the funds used. Indeed, Greens managed to have the budgetary audit board (Cocobu) agree to make an extensive study on ecological and social auditing. The contract for this study is currently being awarded. The study could be one of the most interesting areas of modern development of improving efficiency of public spending.

Regarding the new financial regulation, the Greens tabled several amendments aiming at improving transparency and increasing the possibilities for the institutions to take environmental concerns into consideration when making public procurement (partial success for the Greens).

Culture

The Greens were the most active political group in defending of the European Film Industry. Indeed, thanks to the own-initiative Vander Taelen reports on Achieving a better circulation of European films in the internal market and in the candidate countries and on Certain legal aspects relating to cinematographic and other audio-visual work, the Green/EFA Group encouraged the defence and promotion of the European Film Industry.

The Greens also promoted the revision of the Television without Frontiers Directive in order to establish a clear definition of the concepts of 'European work' and 'independent producer', and to include the defence of Media pluralism.

Concerning vigilance with regard to artists' rights: The Green/EFA Group took the initiative of a resolution on the rights of audio-visual artists that was quite successful. The resolution required in particular a clearer protection from intellectual property law at the international level.

The Greens have also been vigilant on artists' rights in other reports such as 'Making a European Area of Longlife Learning', tabling amendments with respect to their employment conditions, the implications of performing arts in other economic sectors and a clearer definition of "performing arts"

The Green/EFA Group fought for the respect and the promotion of minority languages and linguistic diversity.

In various reports, the Greens insisted on the difference between cultural goods and services and the other goods and services. They also defended the protection of cultural diversity and fought against the liberalisation of cultural goods within the WTO, in particular through the introduction of oral questions on the subject.

Foreign Affairs, International Relations and Human Rights

The concept of a European Civil Peace Corp was launched within the EP by the Green/EFA Group, which constantly pushed it forward. (Per Gahrton recommendation and amendments to various reports).

It is also thanks to the Greens that the European Civil Peace Corps is today included in the final project of the European Constitution even though it is restrained to humanitarian tasks. Thanks to this green concept, the Council, the Commission and Member States have widely accepted the principle to contract civil society actors in crisis-prevention and management operations.

The Greens called, more than others, for the development of an effective and consistent policy of conflict prevention (Lagendijk report). Today conflict prevention is one of the objectives of the Union's External Policy mentioned in the draft Constitution.

The Greens persisted in raising the long debated question of the implementation of the human rights clause. They have been pleading with the Council and the Commission to define a clear mechanism by which this clause can be used.

The idea of an International War Crime Tribunal for former Yugoslavia was initially put forward by the Greens, namely by Alexander Langer. This concept was then used for the setting up of the International Criminal Court (ICC). The Greens have been a major driving force on the ICC (initiators of all the resolutions in this field), and are the main sponsors of the EP parliamentary intergroup "Friends of the ICC".

The Greens were first to require and to obtain plenary declarations by the Council and Commission on the abolition of the death penalty and torture (including firm resolutions on these issues).

The proposal of a Stability Pact for South East Europe was originally put forward by the Greens. The proposal of a special envoy for the Caucasus was made by the Greens in the beginning of this legislature and was included in the Gahrton report. The Council then eventually accepted this idea and recently appointed a envoy for this region.

As to Chechnya, it is thanks to the Greens that the European Parliament urged the involvement in the peace process of all the parties of Chechnyan society, including the last elected President Aslam Maskadow. In view of what was going in Chechnya, the Green/EFA Group succeeded in temporarily suspending the signing of the Science and Technology Cooperation agreement with Russia.

The role of the Greens was decisive with respect to the appalling situation of nuclear waste poured in the Barents Sea.

In the field of the radioactive warheads (depleted uranium) and fragmentation-weapons, the Greens convinced the European Parliament to adopt a resolution calling for a moratorium on this type of weaponry.

In the field of nuclear weapons, the Greens obtained a Council and Commission declaration to ensure a thorough EU preparation of the third Nuclear Proliferation Treaty (NPT) review conference prepcom in spring 2004.

Always on the frontline where Tibet is considered, the Greens' were instrumental in the EP's adoption of the proposal of an EU special envoy to Tibet.

Sakharov Prize laureates, Nurit Peled-Elhanan and Izzat Ghazzawi, were proposed by the Green/EFA Group with the aim to draw the attention not to belligerent parties but to the parties peacefully striving for peace and reconciliation in the Middle East.

In 2000, the Greens were the first to ask for a war crime tribunal to judge Saddam Hussein's regime.

Thanks to the Greens, the EU ensures thorough and annual preparation and monitoring of the annual session of the UN Commission on Human rights.

The Greens strongly contributed to the success of the EU Code of Conduct on Arms Exports. Concerning the situation in Iraq, thanks to the adoption of several amendments from the Greens and the Socialists, the EP took a very clear position against the war in Iraq, on 30 January 2003, while expressing its opposition to any unilateral military action and pre-emptive strikes.

On the basis of a green initiative, 454 Members of the European Parliament as well as national parliaments inside and outside of Europe signed an appeal against the war. Within the framework of this initiative, a delegation of 31 members from four political groups in the EP went to Baghdad, New York and to Washington to launch an ultimate call against the war.

For a long time, the Greens have been the main political force demanding a revised EU policy on North Korea. We notably demanded the halt of European support for KEDO (the Korean peninsula Energy Development Organisation) and pushed instead for the development of alternative energy programmes for North Korea. On 30 January 2003, the EP finally adopted a resolution that was close to the Green position in the energy field.

In December 2003, the Green/EFA Group obtained a Council and Commission declaration on the proposal of several EU countries to lift the embargo on arms export to China. Thanks to this Green initiative the EP adopted a resolution firmly requiring the maintenance of the embargo.

Foreign trade (including WTO)

The Green/EFA Group is the only political force to systematically reject 'free trade' and call for 'fair-trade' and sustainable development. The Greens have always stressed the fact that trade has to serve social and environmental objectives and not the reverse.

In this context, the contributions of the Greens in Seattle (WTO), in Porto Alegre (World Social Forum (WSF) and World Parliamentary Forum (WPF)), in Doha (WTO), in Johannesburg (World Summit for Sustainable Development), in Cancun (WTO) and in Mumbai (World Social Forum and World Parliamentary Forum) served the circulation of the Green message and the creation of new dynamics.

The Green/EFA Group was co-initiator of the World Parliamentary Forum with, until now, four meetings which took place in parallel to the World Social Forum (WSF) in Porto Alegre and Mumbai, and one meeting of the European branch of the WPF. The Greens are also co-

organisers of the International Parliamentary Network of which they share the responsibility for the secretariat.

Since the Gothenburg Summit, the Greens have been firm supporters of the implementation of SIAs (Sustainability Impact Assessments) for all major external activities. It is today an accepted fact.

The Lucas report on the EU-Mexico agreement includes the formal participation of civil society and of the concerned parliaments in the assessment of international agreements.

Women's rights

Green rapporteur Patsy Sorensen wrote the first major Parliamentary report on the trafficking of human beings and this paved the way for a whole series of initiatives by the European Commission and the Council. Among these were: a common definition of trafficking in Member States' penal law, higher sanctions, and a new directive on the protection trafficking victims – especially for those who have been sexually exploited. The Greens worked towards raising applicant countries' awareness of this issue and contributed to the insertion of the question into monitoring reports

With the revision of the Directive on equal treatment for women and men as regards access to employment, the Greens succeeded in integrating optimal protection for women against discrimination, including, for example, a restriction on asking family-related questions during the recruitment process. The Greens also managed to include in the directive, increased protection against sexual harassment in the broad sense; the right of return to the same or similar job after maternity leave; and retroactive rights to promotion and other benefits during maternity leave.

The Hautala report established a national organisation for controlling the implementation of the directive and the 'acquis communautaire' as regards women's rights in the workplace. The report also organised the receipt of individual and collective complaints.

The Greens promoted a maximum protection for victims of sexual harassment, as well as for witnesses. Furthermore, as a result of Green pressure, all European companies will have to present an action plan against sexual harassment and to encourage equality programmes at the level of their company. This directive will enter into force on 1 January 2005.

On 10 March 2004, on the initiative of the Greens, a resolution was adopted in order to seek and designate a woman as President of the European Commission.

Access to documents and petitions

It is thanks to the Greens that a total block on citizens' access to information in the fields of security and defence policy and more largely in the field of Foreign Affairs was avoided.

The Greens strongly influenced the Regulation on public access to the European Institutions' documents. (At present, even the internal documents of the Commission, the EP or the Council, as well as the Member States communications in the European Institutions are included in this regulation).

The Greens have constantly supported and promoted petitions regarding the Spanish Hydrological Plan. Thanks to several hearings, the public was finally made aware of this issue. The Greens have also supported petitions on Sellafield and La Hague – both concerning nuclear waste processing and/or MOX production. The STOA report, initiated on a Green initiative, enabled the organisation of several hearings within the Petitions Committee on nuclear waste processing.

A petition introduced by the Greens against a proposed development in Crystal Palace Park, UK, lead the European Commission, on 1 December 2003, to take the UK to the European Court of Justice for failure to make a proper environmental impact assessment of the project. Despite initial parliamentary rejection, the Greens managed to obtain an EP delegation to Finland in order to examine a harbour project built on a Natura 2000 site (the Petition on the port of Vuosaari promoted by the Finnish associations for nature conservation).

Green initiatives in plenary (aside from parliamentary reports)

From October 2000 until the present day the Greens have proposed and obtained, alone or with other groups, more than 120 initiatives in parliamentary plenary sessions. Through these initiatives, with or without resolution, the Green/EFA Group requested the opinion of the Council, the European Commission and Parliament. In this way, the Greens succeeded in putting their priorities forward and in responding to political current events and citizens' requests. (For these initiatives, please see the separate list).

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