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MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION

further to Questions for Oral Answer B6-0153/2008 and B6-0154/2008

pursuant to Rule 108(5) of the Rules of Procedure

by Ana Maria Gomes

on behalf of the PSE Group

on depleted uranium weapons and their effect on human health and the environment - towards a global ban on the use of such weapons

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European Parliament resolution on depleted uranium weapons and their effect on human health and the environment - towards a global ban on the use of such weapons

The European Parliament,

- having regard to its previous resolutions on the harmful effects of the use of uranium (including depleted uranium) in conventional ammunition, calling for:
 - (a) thorough investigations – their outcome to be reported to Parliament – concerning its use in military operations in the Balkans, Iraq, Afghanistan and other regions and its effect on military personnel and civilians and their land (13 February 2003),
 - (b) the establishment, pending the outcome of these investigations, of a moratorium by all members of the EU and NATO in accordance with the EU precautionary principle (17 January 2001),
 - (c) the introduction of a total ban (17 November 2005 and 16 November 2006),
- having regard to the UN Secretary-General's speech on the occasion of the International Day for Preventing the Exploitation of the Environment in War and Armed Conflict (6 November 2002), stating that 'although international conventions govern nuclear, chemical and biological weapons, new technologies, such as depleted uranium ammunition, threaten the environment',
- having regard to UN General Assembly Resolution 62/30 entitled 'Effects of the use of armaments and ammunitions containing depleted uranium', which was adopted by an overwhelming majority on 5 December 2007 and which highlighted concerns about the military use of depleted uranium and urged UN member states to re-examine the health hazards posed by the use of uranium weapons,
- having regard to Rule 108(5) of its Rules of Procedure,
- A. whereas depleted uranium has been widely used in modern warfare, both as ammunition against hardened targets in rural and urban environments and as hardened armoured protection against missile and artillery attacks,
- B. whereas, ever since its use by the allied forces in the first war against Iraq, there have been serious concerns about the radiological and chemical toxicity of the fine uranium particles produced when such weapons impact on hard targets; whereas concerns have also been expressed about the contamination of soil and groundwater by expended rounds that have missed their targets,
- C. whereas, despite the fact that scientific research has so far been unable to find conclusive evidence of harm, owing in part to the unwillingness of military authorities to allow independent and timely research, there are numerous testimonies as to the harmful and often deadly effects on both military personnel (e.g. Italian personnel returning from

Kosovo) and civilians (e.g. pregnant women and their deformed children in Iraq),

- D. whereas the last few years have seen great advances in terms of understanding the environmental and health hazards posed by depleted uranium, and whereas it is high time that international military standards were brought into line with these advances,
 - E. whereas the use of depleted uranium in warfare runs counter to the basic rules and principles enshrined in written and customary international, humanitarian and environmental law,
1. Urges the Member States to adhere to paragraph 1 of the UN resolution adopted on 5 December 2007 and to submit a report with their views on the effects of the use of armaments and ammunition containing depleted uranium before the end of May 2008;
 2. Requests that the Council and Commission undertake thorough investigations into the use of depleted uranium in all regions where European military and civilian personnel have been deployed within the framework of international operations; urges both NATO and the US to offer their full contribution to these studies;
 3. Urges Member States, within the framework of future operations, not to use depleted uranium weapons in ESDP operations and not to deploy military and civilian personnel in regions where no guarantee can be given to the effect that depleted uranium has not been, or will not be, used;
 4. Urges Member States, the Council and the Commission to provide full information to their military and civilian personnel on mission, as well as to their professional organisations, about the probability that depleted uranium has been or might be used in their region of operations, and to take sufficient protective measures;
 5. Calls on the Member States, the Council and the Commission to establish an environmental inventory of depleted uranium-contaminated areas (including testing ranges) and to provide full support – including financial support – for projects to assist victims and their relatives as well as for clean-up operations in the affected areas;
 6. Calls on all EU Member States and NATO countries to work further towards a global ban – or, at the very least, a moratorium – on the use of depleted uranium weapons, and systematically to halt production and procurement of this type of weaponry;
 7. Calls on the Member States and the Council to take the lead in working towards an international treaty - through the UN or through a 'coalition of the willing' - to establish a ban on the development, production, stockpiling, transfer, testing and use of uranium weapons as well as the destruction or recycling of existing stocks;
 8. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission, the governments and parliaments of the Member States, NATO and the NATO Parliamentary Assembly, the UN, Euromil, the International Red Cross, the World Health Organisation and the International Coalition to Ban Uranium Weapons.