

P6_TA(2009)0195

EU strategy for better ship dismantling

European Parliament resolution of 26 March 2009 on an EU strategy for better ship dismantling

The European Parliament,

- having regard to the Commission Green Paper of 22 May 2007 on Better Ship Dismantling (COM(2007)0269),
 - having regard to its resolution of 21 May 2008 on the Green Paper on better ship dismantling¹,
 - having regard to the Commission Communication of 19 November 2008 on an EU strategy for better ship dismantling (COM(2008)0767),
 - having regard to Articles 2 and 6 of the EC Treaty, which provide that environmental protection requirements must be integrated into the various sectors of Community policy in order to promote environmentally sustainable development of economic activity,
 - having regard to Article 175 of the EC Treaty,
 - having regard to the Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and their Disposal (Basel Convention), which the United Nations approved on 22 March 1989 as a framework for the regulation of international shipments of hazardous wastes,
 - having regard to Regulation (EC) No 1013/2006 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 14 June 2006 on shipments of waste² (Waste Shipments Regulation),
 - having regard to the Diplomatic Conference, which will be held by the International Maritime Organisation (IMO) in May 2009, on the Convention on the Safe and Environmentally Sound Recycling of Ships (Ship Recycling Convention),
 - having regard to Rule 108(5) of its Rules of Procedure,
- A. whereas there is serious concern that without urgent regulatory action at EU level the conditions in which the dismantling of ships in South Asia is taking place, which are both environmentally destructive and degrading to humankind, will further deteriorate,
- B. whereas the Basel Convention (following the endorsement of the European Council) recognises that a ship may become waste; whereas, however, it can at the same time be defined as a ship under other international rules, in that a majority of shipowners are currently not informing the authorities of their intention to dispose of their vessels; whereas, therefore, shipowners should contribute to ensuring that information is made available with

¹ Texts adopted, P6_TA(2008)0222.

² OJ L 190, 12.7.2006, p. 1.

regard to their intent to dispose of their vessels and with regard to any hazardous materials on board their ships;

- C. whereas the Waste Shipments Regulation continues to be systematically disregarded and whereas the responsibility and role of flag-of-convenience states as a major barrier to combating illegal exports of toxic wastes is recognised,
- D. whereas the number of ships going out of service following the global phase-out of single-hull oil tankers and a backlog of old vessels now being withdrawn from the market, in part due to the recession, will lead to an uncontrolled expansion of sub-standard facilities in South Asia, and will spread even further to countries in the African region, if no immediate and concrete action is taken by the EU,
- E. whereas the breaking of ships through a method known as 'beaching', whereby ships are run aground on tidal flats, has been globally condemned as being incapable of delivering safety for workers and of providing adequate protection of the marine environment from ship-borne pollutants,
 - 1. Points out that Parliament's above-mentioned resolution, and its views expressed therein, are still valid, and stresses that these views should be reflected as far as possible in the Ship Recycling Convention which is due to be adopted in May 2009;
 - 2. Points to the need for ship recycling to be treated as an integral part of a ship's life cycle, with recycling requirements being taken into account at the planning stage for the construction and fitting-out of the ship;
 - 3. Points out that end-of-life ships should be regarded as hazardous waste, as a result of the many hazardous substances contained in such ships, and should therefore fall within the scope of the Basel Convention;
 - 4. Welcomes the EU strategy for better ship dismantling; stresses, however, that the Commission must rapidly move beyond feasibility studies and fully commit to action which will safeguard the effective implementation of the Waste Shipments Regulation; calls, in this respect, for tighter controls and monitoring by national port authorities and invites the Commission to present guidelines in this area;
 - 5. Stresses that there is no time to waste, and calls for concrete regulatory action at EU level that moves beyond the regrettably weak remedies of the IMO;
 - 6. Calls for an explicit prohibition on 'beaching' of end-of-life ships, and considers that any technical assistance to South Asian countries within an EU framework should further aim at the phasing out of this grossly unsustainable and seriously flawed breaking method;
 - 7. Urges the Commission and the Member States to negotiate entry-into-force conditions which will ensure that the Ship Recycling Convention will indeed be applicable very rapidly;
 - 8. Calls upon the Member States to sign the Ship Recycling Convention and to ratify it as soon as possible after an agreement is reached at IMO level;
 - 9. Calls upon the Commission, the Member States and ship-owners to apply without delay the

main elements of the Ship Recycling Convention in order to ensure that the ships which will be sent for dismantling in the coming months and years will indeed be dealt with in a safe and environmentally sound manner;

10. Stresses that the Ship Recycling Convention, once adopted in Hong Kong in May 2009, will have to be evaluated with regard to a level of control equivalent to the Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and their Disposal, which is incorporated into the European Waste Shipments Regulation;
11. Supports the suggestions by the Commission for measures to establish independent certification and auditing of ship dismantling facilities; considers that such measures are urgently needed and stresses that any Community funding of the shipping industry should be made conditional upon the beneficiary's use of such certified facilities; welcomes in this regard the standards developed by the European Maritime Safety Agency (EMSA) as moving in the right direction, but expects further improvements to be undertaken in the near future;
12. Calls on the Commission to propose concrete measures, such as labelling schemes for safe and clean recycling facilities, to promote the transfer of know-how and technology in order to help dismantling sites in South Asia comply with international safety and environmental standards, and in particular with the standards which will be set by the Ship Recycling Convention; believes that this objective should also be taken into account in the wider framework of the EU's development aid policy towards the countries involved in ship dismantling;
13. Strongly encourages dialogue between the EU and the governments of South Asian countries involved in ship dismantling on the issue of labour conditions at shipbreaking yards, including the question of child labour;
14. Calls for a funding mechanism that is based on mandatory contributions from the shipping industry and is in line with the producer responsibility principle;
15. Calls upon the Commission to clearly establish that the state with jurisdiction over owners of waste is the responsible state;
16. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission, the governments and parliaments of the Member States, the governments of Turkey, Bangladesh, China, Pakistan and India, and the IMO.