

## STRASBOURG ROUND-UP July 2005

Dear Friends,

Last month's parliamentary proceedings in Strasbourg closed with news of the London bombs on Thursday 7 July following the previous day's euphoria among British MEPs when London clinched the 2012 Olympics. The usual bustle of MEPs was replaced by a stony silence, broken by a dignified statement by President Borrell and other messages of support from colleagues. With the news bringing back the terrible memories of Madrid's commuter train bombings in 2004, Spanish MEPs were particularly keen to communicate their solidarity and support.

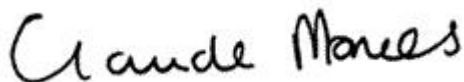
Every party member reading this newsletter will know of the deep implications of the bombings. At EU level Charles Clarke and Gordon Brown came to Brussels to argue for Europe-wide anti-terrorist measures in the area of email data retention and combating the financing of terrorism respectively. I have commented on these measures in the media as new data retention laws are typical of the difficult balance that has to be struck between security and human rights. More information on this is on my website at [www.claudemoraes.net](http://www.claudemoraes.net).

In London I have commented particularly on the community relations and asylum implications. The lead taken by the Mayor of London and his 'unity' message has been widely praised across the EU and particularly by our Party of European Socialist colleagues. As we all know, there will continue to be fall out from the bombings - I would be grateful for your views, as I have been asked to comment on their implications by the media and at various meetings.

Please note that the next Strasbourg Round-Up will be at the end of September. Parliament resumes in August after the summer recess.

### **In this month's issue:**

- News from Strasbourg & Brussels
- Constituency Visits
- Parliamentary Questions asked by Claude Moraes MEP
- Diary Dates
- A Message from Tribune



**Claude Moraes MEP**  
**Labour Member of the European Parliament for London**

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## **NEWS FROM STRASBOURG AND BRUSSELS**

### **G8 MEETING**

In advance of the G8 meeting, Labour's European Development spokesperson Glenys Kinnock MEP said that the UK had made a strong commitment to making poverty history.

"The world has, at last, to be ready to keep its promises to Africa - on aid, on unpayable debt and on fair trade. There are no "ifs" or "buts" or "whens". We can work together to invest in better crops, improve malaria control, get medicines to the sick, develop an AIDS vaccine and protect fragile ecosystems. We are all diminished by a world which is plagued by the triad of poverty, debt and unfair trade. The hypocrisy must end. The truth must be told and understood."

### **LONDON MEPS CONGRATULATE 2012 OLYMPIC BID TEAM**

In July, my London Labour colleagues and I congratulated the London 2012 team on its huge and terrific achievement bringing the Olympic Games to London.

The London games will marry the greatest sporting event in the world with unprecedented urban regeneration for the East End of London. We want the Olympics to leave a legacy in London and all over the UK - of success, achievement and aspiration - everything the world's greatest sporting event has to offer.

### **MORAES REPORT ON EUROPOL**

At the July Strasbourg plenary session, my report on the administration of Europol (the EU's police cooperation agency) was voted through unanimously. The report concentrates on the accountability and efficiency of this agency which deals with police cooperation on drugs trafficking, trafficking in human beings, cross-border organised crime, extradition requests and "white-collar crime."

### **INDIAN PARLIAMENT DELEGATION**

In July, I met with a number of members of Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha to discuss India's relationship with the UK and Europe. During the meeting we discussed the development of trade partnerships as a key area in which the EU should work with India. The Indian MPs expressed India's commitment to ensuring that the Doha Round of trade talks delivers free and fair trade for the most vulnerable. The key to cooperation is to develop genuine partnership on equal terms and it is up to politicians on both sides to work on this basis.

### **MEPS BAN DANGEROUS CHEMICALS FROM KIDS' TOYS**

Chemicals used in children's toys that result in fertility problems and serious disease such as cancer, were banned by the European Parliament in July.

Phthalates which are used to soften PVC toys can get into the bodies of young children when they put plastic toys in their mouths. Parliament banned the three most dangerous phthalates from future use in toy manufacturing and place tough restrictions on another three chemicals.

Certain phthalates have been shown in tests to cause endocrine disruption, damage to the liver and kidneys and fertility problems.

Linda McAvan MEP, Labour's Euro spokesperson on the environment said: "With such overwhelming scientific evidence, we don't want to wait for doctors to link a child's cancer with phthalates. We know it's a risk, and we know these chemicals are dangerous. We are acting now to prevent further damage to children's health."

### **LABOUR MEPS VOTE TO REJECT FLAWED EU SOFTWARE LAW**

Labour Euro MPs rejected the proposed EU law on computer-implemented inventions. At the plenary session in Strasbourg, Arlene McCarthy, Labour's Euro spokesperson on the legal affairs committee explained that no law is better than a bad law.

Arlene McCarthy MEP said, "We could not afford to end up with a botched law which would fail give business more legal certainty on the patentability of their inventions. The sensible option, and the one that best serves the interest of better regulation, is to reject the law.

We invite the Commission and Council as a priority to come to forward now with the long awaited European community patent law. Then we can revisit the issue of patent protection for computer implemented inventions within a general framework law.

### **MEPS BACK STRUCTURAL FUNDS**

In July, Labour MEPs voted to determine how structural funds will be spent after the budget for 2007 - 13 has been decided.

We are voting to support the excellent partnerships that communities have built up to regenerate their economies. Partnerships between local enterprise companies, education and industry are spending money on transport links, IT networks, research facilities, business incubator units, business and retail parks to boost GDP and new jobs in their regions.

We have negotiated improvements to the structural funds securing provision for disabled people to access funding, environmental sustainability, and the involvement of local government and community groups. We are proud of these improvements which increase accessibility to EU funding.

There has been no settlement on the budget for 2007-2013. In the meantime we are voting on the principle that structural funds are critical for UK regional economies to be competitive."

### **EUROPEAN COURT RULING ON FOOD SUPPLEMENTS**

In July, Labour MEPs welcomed the European Court of Justice ruling requiring that manufacturers publish a "safe list" of supplements used in health foods.

Philip Whitehead MEP, Chair of the European Parliament's Internal Market and Consumer Protection Committee said in Brussels, "In the fast-growing internal market the citizen needs to know what is safe and what might not be. The UK is the largest producer of these supplements and has much to gain from the growth of the market. The bigger the market the stronger the case for safety, including information about dosage and areas of possible risk."

## **PARLIAMENTARY QUESTIONS ASKED BY CLAUDE MORAES MEP**

The answers to these questions should shortly appear on EUROPARL, the website of the European Parliament - [http://www.europarl.eu.int/questions/default\\_en.htm](http://www.europarl.eu.int/questions/default_en.htm). If you have problems accessing the full questions and answers, please contact my office by email at [cmoraes@europarl.fsnet.co.uk](mailto:cmoraes@europarl.fsnet.co.uk).

### **TRANSPARENCY OF EUROPOL**

Following the recent appointment of a new Director at EUROPOL, I asked the Commission and the Council their view on accountability arrangements between EUROPOL and the EU Institutions. I also asked about measures to tackle illegal human and drugs trafficking as well as other forms of organised crime.

### **UK PRESIDENCY & PLANS FOR THE PROTECTION OF MINORITIES IN THE ENLARGED EU**

This question was answered by Douglas Alexander MP with the EU Presidency now in play until December 2005.

## **USE OF EU RESEARCH (5TH FRAMEWORK PROGRAMME) FOR MEDICAL & SOCIAL SCIENCES**

I asked a question specifically relating to the treatment of rheumatic diseases, particularly arthritis, one of the fastest growing disabilities in the EU.

## **CONSTITUENCY VISITS & MEETINGS** included:

### **\* Age UK Meeting**

I spoke to a meeting of AGE UK made up of representatives from various older people's organisations including Age Concern, Help the Aged, the Black and Ethnic Minority Elders Forum, the National Pensioner's Convention and the Greater London Forum for Older People amongst others. I enjoyed a lively discussion which touched on a variety of issues including my role as Rapporteur on legislation affecting older people in anti-discrimination initiatives, the work of the European Parliament's Intergroup on Ageing, and the UK Presidency of the UK and the agenda for older people's issues.

### **\* Labour Party National Policy Forum**

### **\* TUC European Network Meeting**

## **DIARY DATES**

- \* 18 July - 26 August, Parliamentary Summer Recess
- \* 5 September - 7 September, European Parliament Plenary Session, Strasbourg
- \* 26 September - 29 September, European Parliament Plenary Session, Strasbourg

## **GET IN TOUCH**

For further information about my work please get in touch by email at [cmoraes@europarl.fsnet.co.uk](mailto:cmoraes@europarl.fsnet.co.uk) or visit my website at [www.claudemoraes.net](http://www.claudemoraes.net).

## **MESSAGE FROM TRIBUNE**

Tribune have asked if we would pass on this message concerning their relaunch:

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