

September & October Report from Claude Moraes MEP



Dear Friends

Welcome to my Newsletter.

If you are receiving this for the first time, it is a report from the European Parliament on my work and the work of other Labour MEPs on your behalf in Brussels.

I have been busy in September and October carrying out my work as Deputy Leader of the European Parliamentary Labour Party, a Socialist Group Spokesperson and as your local London MEP.

After August recess, Labour MEPs were confronted with some high profile European developments.

These included the first infringement proceedings against an EU Member State on a human rights issue (France – the expulsion of the Roma). They also included action by MEPs on the banking crisis.

With this and other issues, we can see how the post-Lisbon European Parliament is proving to be an ever more important platform on the world stage for progressives to promote our shared politics.

I regularly update my website and Facebook page on the issues I discuss below.

Claude Moraes

Labour MEP for London

France, the EU and the Roma

The French expulsions of Roma provoked international outrage.

The removals were illegal, immoral and ugly.

As S&D Group Spokesman on Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs, I led the parliamentary pressure on the European Commission to act, speaking out widely in defence of the Roma in the international press. I highlighted the basic fact that EU citizens have the right to free movement in Europe.

I also led for the S&D at the hearing where infringement proceedings against France were announced.

Sarkozy is scapegoating the Roma at a time of historically low ratings for his presidency. The issue is that no EU Member State should be able to take such actions against EU citizens based on their ethnic background simply for political reasons. Our action in the European Parliament fired a warning shot at EU Member States who are already expelling EU citizens to Romania and Bulgaria including Sweden, Denmark and Italy.

For more of what I've been saying on the issue, please see [here](#)

Bankers' Bonuses – EU Action Tougher than Expected

I reported to you in June that a number of consumer-led initiatives are being taken by the European Parliament.

Among these, I highlighted the issue of bankers' bonuses. Now, in October, papers like the Financial Times have been reporting how the rules on bankers' bonuses will be tougher than expected by those in the industry.

The EU is now requiring that up to 60% of bonuses be deferred for up to five years as well as ensure that half of any bonus is paid in a way that is linked to a bank's performance, for example in shares.

This will prompt restructuring in many investment banks and is a concrete example of how Labour MEPs and the European Parliament are taking steps to ensure that the sort of structural problems we saw in the financial crisis are removed.

Read more on this issue [here](#)

The EU Budget

Labour MEPs will amend and vote on the EU budget this week, at the same time as the CSR. We are very conscious of how the cuts will affect people in London, and as a group will vote against all measures which are deemed unnecessary or trivial at this difficult time. If necessary, Labour MEPs will vote against the EU budget.

In the budget, the Parliament wants to toughen budget rules to prevent sovereign debt crises. There are elements to the EU budget which Labour MEPs will focus on including the fact that the Tory-Liberal coalition opposes the European globalisation fund, which has helped EU redundancy pressures in the UK and will be necessary in the coming period of cuts.

The Labour approach to the EU budget is that we do not want to see dogma driven cuts which will endanger public services over and above what is absolutely necessary to reduce the deficit

Read more background on this issue [here](#)

Pakistan human rights and visa agreement

A new agreement between Pakistan and the EU obliges Pakistan to readmit nationals found to be living “illegally” in the EU.

On human rights grounds, I refused to back an imperfect agreement, which nevertheless passed on the basis of votes from centre right MEPs.

I will continue to keep a close eye on this issue and continue to represent the views of Londoners on international human rights.

Read more on this issue [here](#)

Also in the European Parliament in September and October...

Commission President Barroso made the case for **drastic cuts in European public spending** in his State of the Union address. Labour MEPs countered the speech, making the point that deep cuts destroy jobs and ruin projects such as high speed rail and sustainable industries.

Violent anti-gay riots in Serbia could hurt the Balkan country's bid to join the bloc. The riots showed a lack of tolerance for minority rights in Serbia.

European institutions marked the eighth **World Day against the Death Penalty** on 10 October, reaffirming Europe's opposition to capital punishment worldwide.

The European Parliament today **voted by 390 to 192 the extension of maternity and paternity leave** across Europe. There was cross-party support for new mothers to have 20 weeks off work with full pay and fathers to have two weeks and the Parliament must now negotiate hard with EU ministers to make these improvements a reality.

Opposition Watch

UKIP abstain on vote condemning Iran stoning death sentence

The European Parliament's resolution condemning Iran for sentencing women to death by stoning was overwhelmingly supported by MEPs: not one MEP voted against. Yet UKIP MEPs abstained. Even their far-right Italian and Danish colleagues supported the motion. UKIP is unwavering in its commitment to oppose anything that the European Parliament endorses.

Conservatives oppose measures on discrimination against women

The Tories have voted against calls for better care provision for older women, against a recognition that gender discrimination does not disappear with age, and against "the right to adequate, affordable and quality social and health

services of general interest" for older women. They were joined by the racist Lega Nord from Italy and Andrew Brons from the BNP.

Both reports on anti-discrimination were adopted by overwhelming majorities of other MEPs.

BNP lose court case brought by Marmite

The legal action brought against BNP for misuse of the 'Marmite' brand finished with the BNP settling to Marmite's owners, Unilever, out of court.

Tory Leader Steps Down

This week, Timothy Kirkhope MEP stood down as leader of the Conservative MEPs. This may result in a further shift to the right for their group.

Labour Party News

The European Parliamentary Labour Party had a full programme at Labour Party conference including fringe meetings which I spoke at.

Following the leadership contest, the EPLP leader Glenis Willmott now has a permanent place at the Shadow Cabinet.

In the following weeks, I'll be reporting back to the following Labour CLPs personally: .

Croydon North CLP - October 27th 2010

Lewisham East CLP - November 5th 2010

Kingston and Surbiton CLP - November 18th 2010

Finchley Fabian Society November 25th 2010

Cities of London & Westminster - January 25th 2011

Hackney North CLP - February 24th 2011

Islington North CLP - March 16th 2011

Iford South CLP - March 24th 2011

List of events and meetings

September

01 September – LIBE-FEMM Prep meeting

01 September – S&D Working Group on Extremism

01 September – EPLP Meeting

02 September – Meeting with UNHCR for the Extension Directive
02 September – FEMM meeting
02 September – LIBE meeting
03 September – TUC Network Europe Meeting
04 September – Labour Friends of Turkey meeting
07 September – State of the Union speech with Commissioner Barroso
07 September – Spoke in the debate on European Commission statement on the Roma in France
07 September – Spoke in the debate on European Commission statement on press freedom in Europe
07 September – European Commission statement on same sex marriage
07 September – Meeting of rapporteurs and shadow rapporteurs & Commissioner Malmstrom on asylum
08 September – Shadows meeting on long-term resident directive
08 September – Chaired the Roma Taskforce meeting
13 September – IMCO
13 September – LIBE meeting
14 September – MEP Debate for ENARs newsletter on the issue of political participation and representation of ethnic minorities.
14 September – Working Group for "Citizens Europe" meeting
14 September – Socialist Group Bureau and Co-ordinators Meeting
15 September – S&D Working Group on Extremism
21 September – LIBE Coordinators meeting on Roma with Commissioners Reding and Malmstrom
21 September – LIBE Working Group
21 September – Meeting with Commissioner Malmstrom regarding PNR
21 September – S&D Coordinators Meeting
27 September – LIBE Coordinators Meeting
27 September – NLGN Dinner - Keeping London Competitive
27 September – Speaker, Labour Party Conference Fringe event - The Path Back to Power
28 September – LIBE hearing on combating child sexual abuse
29 September - Joint LIBE-FEMM Committee meeting
29 September – Extraordinary LIBE meeting with European Commissioners on the Roma
29 September – IMCO
30 September – IMCO
30 September – Global Tamil Forum Meeting

October

04 October – LIBE meeting with national parliaments on EU agencies
05 October - LIBE meeting with national parliaments on EU agencies
05 October - IMCO
05 October - Meeting on Corporate Social Responsibility
06 October – Extension Directive Shadows Meeting
06 October – LIBE Committee meeting with European Commission on the EU accession to the ECHR
07 October – LIBE Committee meeting
07 October – Meeting with Commissioner de Gucht on fair trade

11 October – LIBE Committee meeting
11 October – Meeting with the EU Affaires Committee of the Polish Parliament
12 October – IMCO Committee meeting
12 October - Trialogue for an Extension Directive
12 October – Task Force on Copyright Directive
12 October – Citizens’ Europe event
12 October – Bureau and Coordinators meeting
13 October - S&D Working Group on Extremism
13 October – Meeting with UK and EU Kashmiri organisations
14 October – IMCO
19 October – Coordinators dinner with Commissioner Malmstrom
19 October - LIBE
19 October - S&D Coordinators meeting
20 October -Meeting with the Commission for the EU accession to the ECHR
26 October - IMCO
26 October - LIBE
26 October - Meeting with Mr. Manservisi, Director General of DG Home Affairs
27 October – European and South African Inter-parliamentary meeting
27 October – Report back to Croydon North CLP