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JOINT MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION

further to the Council and Commission statement on EU Citizenship for sale

pursuant to Rule 110(2) of the Rules of Procedure

on EU Citizenship for sale

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European Parliament resolution on the EU Citizenship for sale

The European Parliament,

- having regard to the Articles 4, 5, 9 and 10 of Treaty on European Union;
 - having regard to Article 20 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union;
 - having regard to Rule 110(2) of its Rules of Procedure;
- A. Whereas every Member State is expected to act responsibly in preserving the Union's common values and achievements, also noting that such values and achievements are invaluable and cannot have a price tag attached to them;
- B. Whereas a number of EU Member States have introduced schemes which directly or indirectly result in the sale of EU citizenship to third-country nationals,
- C. Whereas an increasing number of Member States are issuing temporary or permanent residence permits to third-country nationals who make investments in the Member State;
- D. Whereas in some Member States permanent residency with access to the whole Schengen Area can be obtained; and, whereas in certain Member States steps are being taken that may lead to the effective sale of citizenship of that Member State;
- E. Whereas in some cases these investment programmes have possible negative side effects, such as local housing markets distortions;
- F. Whereas the Maltese Government, in particular, has recently taken steps to introduce a scheme for the outright sale of Maltese citizenship, which automatically entails the outright sale of EU citizenship as a whole without any residency requirement;
- G. Whereas such outright sale of EU citizenship undermines the mutual trust that the Union is built upon;
- H. Whereas EU citizens in particular have the right to move and reside freely within the EU; to vote and stand as candidates in municipal and European Parliament elections wherever they live in the EU, under the same conditions as nationals; to be assisted by another EU country's embassy or consulate outside the EU under the same conditions as a citizen of that country, if their own country is not represented;
- I. Whereas the EU is based on mutual trust between Member States, which trust is built on years of gradual work and goodwill from Member States, as well as from the Union as a whole;
- J. Whereas concerns have also been expressed about the criminal abuse of these

investment programmes, including issues such as money laundering;

- K. Whereas concerns exist as regards possible discriminations because these practices of Member States only allow the richest third country nationals to obtain EU citizenship and without consideration of any other criteria;
 - L. Whereas it is not clear whether citizens will really benefit from this new policy, for example through collection of taxes, as foreign investors will not be required to pay taxes; reminds that citizenship does not only involve rights, but also responsibilities;
 - M. Whereas EU citizenship is one of the EU's major achievements whereas, according to the EU Treaties, matters of residency and citizenship are the exclusive competence of the Member States;
1. Is concerned that this way of getting citizenship in Malta and any other national scheme that may involve the direct or indirect outright sale of EU citizenship undermines the very concept of European citizenship.
 2. Calls on Member States to recognise and live up to the responsibilities they hold in safeguarding the values and objectives of the Union.
 3. Calls on the Commission as the guardian of the Treaties to clearly state whether these schemes respect the letter and the spirit of the Treaties and the Schengen Borders Code as well as the EU non-discrimination rules;
 4. Reiterates that Article 4(3) of the Treaty on European Union enshrines the principle of "sincere cooperation" between the Union and the Member States, that shall, in full mutual respect, assist each other in carrying out tasks which flow from the Treaties.
 5. Expresses concern about the implications of some of the investors' and citizenship schemes that have recently been established by different EU Member States;
 6. Acknowledges that matters of residency and citizenship are the competence of the Member States, however calls upon the Member States to be careful when exercising their competences in this area and to take possible side effects into account.
 7. Notes that EU citizenship implies a stakeholding with the Union and depends on a person's ties with Europe, its Member States or on personal ties with EU citizens; reminds that EU Citizenship should never become a tradable commodity.
 8. Underlines that the rights conferred through EU citizenship are based on human dignity and should not be bought or sold at any price.
 9. Emphasises that access to funds should not be the main criterion in the conferring of EU citizenship to third-country nationals. Calls upon the Member States take into account fraud-related criminal concerns e.g. money laundering.
 10. Notes that on-going competition for more attractive investment conditions or financial resources may lead to the lowering of standards and requirements for obtaining Schengen area residence permits and EU citizenship;

11. Calls on the European Commission to assess the various citizenship schemes in the light of European values and the letter and the spirit of EU legislation and practice, and to issue recommendations in order to prevent such schemes from undermining the trust that the EU has been built upon and guidelines for access to EU citizenship via national schemes.
12. Calls on Malta to bring its current citizenship scheme in line with EU's values.
13. Calls on the Member States that have adopted national schemes that allow to directly or indirectly sell the EU citizenship to third-country nationals to bring them in line with EU's values.
14. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission and the Governments and Parliaments of the Member States;