European Parliament recommendation to the Council on the EU priorities for the 63rd Session of the UN General Assembly

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The Committee on Foreign Affairs adopted the report by Alexander **LAMBSDORFF** (ALDE, DE) containing a proposal for a European Parliament recommendation to the Council on the EU priorities for the 63rd Session of the UN General Assembly.

The proposal for a recommendation includes 6 fundamental points:

1) the EU at the UN and ratification of the Lisbon Treaty: MEPs:

- call for the Union's political priorities for the next UN General Assembly session to be the subject of an in-depth, wide-ranging debate within the European institutions;
- consider that this formal position should be regarded by the Permanent Representations of EU Member States in New York as a binding political platform to be used in negotiations with other countries;
- call for a reorganisation and expansion of the offices in New York and Geneva;
- urge the Council and the Commission to study in depth the implications which the Treaty of Lisbon has for the Union's future representation at the United Nations;
- encourage the Council to define, as soon as possible, the operational nature of the EU's observer status at the United Nations;
- request that Parliament be kept informed about the implications, including the budgetary ones, of any possible steps towards reorganisation of the EU's presence within the various component parts of the UN.

2) the EU contribution to UN reforms: MEPs:

- encourage Member States to demand the review of the mandate and of the programme of work of the United Nations, so that it responds to the contemporary requirements of Member States;
- urge the Council to ensure that the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the Department of Political Affairs are staffed to a level commensurate with their tasks and responsibilities;
- urge the Members State to support efforts by the UN Secretary-General in the process of implementation of the concept of 'responsibility to protect';
- call on Member States to arrive at a more cohesive position on the reform of the UN Security Council, whilst maintaining the ultimate objective, **within a reformed United Nations, of one permanent seat for the European Union**;
- call on EU Member States present in the UN Security Council to uphold EU official positions.

3) the EU and the UN Human Rights Council: the parliamentary committee:

- urges France and Slovakia, as newly elected members of the UN Human Rights Council, to redouble their efforts in ensuring the successful operation of the Human Rights Council;
- calls on the Council to sustain efforts aimed at increasing the accountability of UN Member States in the field of human rights, by increasing the efficiency of the Universal Peer Review;
- calls on all EU Member States to protect the rights of children by supporting the mainstreaming of children's rights in all activities within relevant organs and mechanisms of the UN system.

4) the EU and the UN Peacebuilding Commission (PBC): MEPs believe that it is necessary to:

- strengthen the role of the PBC in relation to the UN system and encourage contributions to the UN Peacebuilding Fund;
- give greater international attention to post-conflict countries;
- ensure that human and financial resources available to the PBC are proportionate to the tasks and expectations of UN bodies and of the beneficiary countries.

5)the EU and the MDGs: MEPs request:

- that the Council supports the calls by President Barroso and Commissioner Louis Michel for Member States to draw up clear, binding national timetables and budgets to increase real aid in order to reach the promised collective target of 0.56% of gross national income in 2010 and 0.7% in 2015;
- that the Council and the EU Member States initiate a UN-wide discussion on the targets to be met in terms of climate change;
- that the Council and EU Member States renew discussions about debt relief at the UN level;
- focusing on the abnormally high maternal mortality rates (500 000 women dying each year) and increasing funding for reproductive health services substantially;
- focusing on the current food crisis.

6)improving EU-UN cooperation in practice: MEPs request that:

- EU Member States which are permanent or non-permanent members of the United Nations Security Council advocate a revision of the UN sanctions system (terrorists' blacklists) to bring it into line with the obligations of the United Nations Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (UNCCPR);
- the EU actively encourage the parties in the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change to pursue negotiations with a view to concluding an international climate change agreement by the end of 2009, and promote the use of renewable and CO_2-neutral energy sources;
- the Council continue to give high priority to building successful cross-regional partnerships to ensure effective implementation of UN General Assembly Resolution 62/149, which calls for a worldwide moratorium on executions with a view to abolishing the death penalty;
- the Member States make the necessary efforts to secure an international consensus that will enable the negotiations on the Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism to be concluded;
- the Council encourage all activities aimed at the mainstreaming of gender issues into all aspects of the UN's activities.