Recommendation to the Council on the 65th Session of the United Nations General Assembly

2010/2020(INI) - 17/03/2010

The Committee on Foreign Affairs adopted the own-initiative report drawn up by Alexander Graf LAMBSDORFF (ALDE, DE) on a proposal for a European Parliament recommendation to the Council on the 65th Session of the United Nations General Assembly. The recommendation covers six priority issues that the committee feels the Council should address at the 65th session which starts in September 2010: the EU's place at the UN, world governance and UN reform, peace and security, development, human rights and climate change.

The European Union at the United Nations: Members note that the current structure of the UN Security Council does not reflect the realities and needs of the 21st century. They also note that the EU and its Member States are the largest contributors to the UN system providing around 40 per cent of the assessed budget of the UN, over 40% of the peacekeeping costs and 12% of troops, as well as over half of the core funding of the UN funds and programmes.

Recommendations include the following:

- to strengthen effective **multilateralism** in order to build a stronger UN;
- to foster the common, coherent and consistent EU approach at the UN that third parties expect;
- to seek to project itself within the UN system as an **honest broker** between different membership groups;
- to push for solutions that allow the Union's empowered external role to be more visible, and to ensure that the EU Delegation to the United Nations in New York is adequately equipped to cope with its enhanced role, particularly in terms of staff;
- to ensure that the **EU speaks with a single voice** in order to make its position heard, while drawing lessons from the climate conference in Copenhagen in December 2009;
- to ensure that the Union's interests are represented in an effective way ,and to project itself as a cohesive force that is able to deliver, especially on significant votes;
- to seek more substantive dialogue with the new US administration and with China, India and Brazil, with the aim of finding common solutions to global challenges;
- to **improve the Union's long-term planning** specifically with regard to major UN events such as the MDG Review and the NPT Review Conference in 2010.

Global governance and UN reform: Members urge the Vice-President/High Representative (VP/HR) to build a **more cohesive position** among EU Member States on the reform of the UN Security Council and to emphasise that **an EU seat in an enlarged Security Council remains a goal of the European Union**.

Amongst recommendations to the Council are the following:

- ensure that clear bridges exist **between the work of the G20 and the UN**, as the legitimate body for global action;
- stress the need for a **comprehensive reform of the Security Council** in all its aspects.

Peace and Security: Members emphasised the need to define better the notion of the principle of the **Responsibility to Protect (R2P)**, and its importance in preventing conflicts. They also want to see a UN resolution on sea-dumped chemical weapons and the threat they present to ecology, health, security and the economy.

On **peacekeeping and peacebuilding,** the committee recommends that the EU take a lead in finding a new horizon for UN peacekeeping by emphasising **civilian-military synergies** and by improving coordination between various regional partners, in particular between the EU and the African Union. It also recommends that the Council strive for a coherent EU position and actions with regard to the review of the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC) in 2011, and support efforts to expand the role of the PBC.

On **nuclear disarmament**, Members want the Council to:

- work with EU Member States towards achieving a successful outcome of the 2010 NPT Review Conference and to commit to the aim of complete nuclear disarmament in line with UN Security Council resolution 1887;
- support the US administration in its commitment to global nuclear disarmament encouraged by President Obama's vision of a world without nuclear weapons.

Development and climate change: Members want the EU to exercise leadership in **strengthening the effectiveness of UN development assistance** since the current fragmentation may lead to progressive marginalisation of the UN as a primary actor in development. There needs to be a more coherent UN programming and operational framework to help maximise the impact of UN development assistance.

In preparation for the **MDG Review Conference**, the EU should reconfirm its commitment to the MDG targets to be reached by 2015 and urge all partners to do the same, pointing to the fact that **donors are falling short on their 2005 pledges** on annual aid flows and that overall progress has been too slow for most of the goals to be met by 2015, notably on maternal health (MDG 5). The report underlines that the international community has to make additional efforts to tackle the adverse effects of the global economic crisis and climate change on developing countries. The Council should propose innovative funding mechanisms such as an **international tax on financial transactions**. It must also reassert its collective commitment to allocate 0.7% of GNI on ODA by 2015, based on clear and binding timetables for each Member State.

The committee goes on to recommend promoting a debate in view of the forthcoming Conference of the Parties to the UN Framework Convention on **Climate Change** (COP16) in Mexico in December 2010 and to start building consensus on the adoption of a new binding international agreement on climate change for the period post-2012. It wants to **avoid the mistakes of COP15 in Copenhagen** which failed to deliver an international binding agreement, by suggesting specific voting rules, based on significant majorities, in order to facilitate progress in the negotiations.

Human Rights: the report urges the VP/HR to speak with one voice on behalf of all EU Member States when addressing human rights issues, and also to call on each Member State to emphasise those unified EU positions in order to give them more weight. It wants to:

- achieve an efficient proactive negotiation strategy as well as a common position on the 2011 review of the Human Rights Council (HRC);
- strongly advocate that the UN General Assembly continue to address country specific situations in resolutions while working to avoid the use of 'No Action Motions';
- concentrate efforts to reinforce the global trend towards the abolition of death penalty.

On **gender mainstreaming**, the report states that those EU Member States who have not yet become active in this respect to produce national action plans (NAPs) to implement UNSC Resolution 1325.

Lastly, the report wants the EU to make efforts to include a separate item on the agenda of the 65th UNGA concerning cooperation between the UN, regional assemblies, national parliaments and the Interparliamentary Union (IPU) in order to foster debate on how parliamentarians, national parliaments and regional parliamentary assemblies can play a more active role in the UN.