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

2010/2020(INI) - 25/03/2010 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament adopted a Recommendation to the Council on the 65th Session of the United Nations General Assembly.

The recommendation covers six priority issues the Council should address at the 65th session which starts in September 2010: i) the EU's place at the UN, ii) world governance and UN reform, iii) peace and security, iv) development, v) climate change and vi) human rights.

1) The European Union at the United Nations: noting that the current structure of the UN Security Council does not reflect the realities and needs of the 21st century, Parliament invites the Council to:

- strengthen, through enhanced dialogue with key partners, effective multilateralism in order to build a stronger UN;
- seek to project itself within the UN system as an honest broker between different membership groups;
- push for solutions that allow the Union's empowered external role and increased responsibility to be more visible;
- ensure that the EU speaks with a single voice in order to make its position heard;
- ensure that the Union's values and interests are represented in an effective and coherent way in the UN system;
- seek more substantive cooperation and dialogue with the new US administration and with emerging global and regional players like China, India and Brazil, with the aim of finding a common agenda and common solutions to global challenges;
- to improve the Union's long-term planning specifically with regard to major upcoming UN events such as the MDG Review and the NPT Review Conference in 2010.

2) Global governance and UN reform: Parliament urges 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 emphasises that an EU seat in an enlarged Security Council remains a goal of the European Union.

The main recommendations are as follows:

- to take a lead in the current debate on global governance and to ensure that clear bridges exist between the work of the G20 and the UN, as the legitimate body for global action;
- to promote stronger participation by national and transnational parliaments in UN activities;
- to contribute to implementing the new gender architecture.

3) Peace and security: Parlieament emphasises the need to define better the notion of the principle of the Responsibility to Protect (R2P), and its importance in preventing conflicts while encouraging its implementation.

On peacekeeping and peacebuilding, Parliament 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, Parliament calls on 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;
- underline the need for effective arms control, including small arms and ammunitions containing depleted uranium;
- strengthen cooperation and coordination with key partners in the fight against terrorism on the basis of full respect for international law and human rights

4) Development and climate change: Parliament wants the EU to exercise leadership in strengthening the effectiveness of UN development assistance and considers that there needs to be a more coherent UN programming and operational framework to help maximise the impact of UN development assistance. In its view, the crisis not be used as an excuse to avoid or delay the necessary global response to climate change and environmental degradation. On the contrary, the response to the crisis should be used as an opportunity to establish the basis of a new and modern green economy.

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 and infant mortality.

The Council should: i) give a clear signal that a new, even more ambitious agenda for poverty eradication will be adopted before 2015, ii) propose innovative funding mechanisms such as an international tax on financial transactions; iii) reassert its collective commitment to allocate 0.7% of GNI on ODA by 2015, based on clear and binding timetables for each Member State.

5) Climate change: Parliament recommends 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.

6) Human rights: Parliament invites 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 the Council to:

- achieve an efficient proactive negotiation strategy as well as a common position on the 2011 review of the Human Rights Council (HRC);
- agree with cross-regional partners in the HRC review on membership criteria and set of guidelines to be used during the election of the HRC;
- exercise leadership in the promotion and protection of human rights, including the rights of members of vulnerable groups and minorities, freedom of expression and free media, freedom of religion, the rights of the child, the protection of human rights defenders and cooperation with civil society;
- concentrate efforts to reinforce the global trend towards the abolition of death penalty.

On gender mainstreaming, the resolution states that the Council should strive to empower more women so they can fulfil their vital role in contributing to sustainable peace, security and reconciliation as well as to promote their participation in mediation and conflict resolution, also in view of the upcoming 10th anniversary of UNSC Resolution 1325.

Lastly, Members suggest that the EU should make efforts to include a separate item on the agenda of the 65th UNGA concerning cooperation between the United Nations Organisation, 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 United Nations.