

EU 2011 report on policy coherence for development

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The Committee on Development adopted the own-initiative report by Birgit SCHNIEBER-JASTRAM (EPP, DE) on the EU 2011 Report on Policy Coherence for Development. It welcomes the EU's efforts towards PCD, underlining that PCD is not only a legal obligation, but also a chance for the EU to establish equal and sustainable partnerships with developing countries that go beyond development cooperation. Members believe that PCD must be based on the **recognition of the right of a country to define by democratic means its own policies**, priorities and strategies to protect its populations' livelihoods in line with the UN International covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural rights.

They insist that the questions regarding the economic, environmental and social impacts of policies inside and outside of the EU laid down in the **2009 Impact Assessments Guidelines** must be answered in the Commission's impact assessments as well as in the impact assessments to be made by Parliament. The Commission should complete the impact assessments in advance of the corresponding policy proposal in order to ensure that civil society organisations (CSOs) and other relevant stakeholders can participate in the process.

It welcomes the Commission's proposal to deepen cooperation with the European Parliament and national parliaments on PCD and proposes that these exchanges should come in the form of **structured annual meetings**, which include clear objectives along with task-monitoring activities with the goal of strengthening PCD in the EU. Furthermore, the report suggests **making PCD a clear priority for the EEAS and the Delegations** by further strengthening the EU's policy dialogue with CSOs, local parliaments and other stakeholders, by asking them to gather evidence on lack of either inconsistency or coherence, by improving the PCD references in programming documents and making them operational, and by developing a training programme for all new EEAS staff to ensure that they are able to understand and apply PCD. Adequate resources to fulfil this task must be allocated.

Trade: Members take the view that the OECD guidelines for multi-national enterprises should become **binding standards in EU investment treaties for business**, ensuring that treaties include clauses on transparency and on the **fight against illicit capital flows**, along with full reporting on environmental and social issues by companies. They point out that investment agreements should improve the rights and duties of governments to regulate economic activities in sensitive policy areas such as the environment and foster decent work in the broader public interest and in the longer-term interest of future generations.

Agricultural and Fisheries Policy: deploring that the share of EU Aid for Trade (AfT) to LDCs declined to 16 % in 2010 (EUR 1.7 billion, as against EUR 8.7 billion to non-LDCs) from 22 % in 2009, the committee calls on the Commission to:

- inform Parliament about the annual and/or multi-annual share of the EDF funds spent as AfT;
- promote, within the WTO, the suggestion of some donors to narrow the scope of the Aid for Trade Initiative in order to make it more focused on key elements of the trade and development nexus, in order to make it more effective and to secure donors' financing.

Members repeat the need for **independent assessments of the EU's agricultural and trade policies**, paying special attention to impacts on local and smallholder producers, and building on evidence submitted by governments, farmers' organisations, civil society organisations and other stakeholders in developing countries which are EU trading partners.

With regard to fisheries policies, stressing that **Fisheries Partnership Agreements (FPA) payments should be compatible with development objectives** and that the impacts of FPAs should be closely monitored by the EU, the committee takes the view that PCD should be reinforced by: a) making DG-MARE and DG-Development jointly responsible for FPAs, b) applying relevant principles outlined in the FAO Code of Conduct for Responsible Fishing, EU commitments towards Policy Coherence for Development, and the EU-ACP Cotonou Agreement, c) incorporating human rights, anti-corruption and accountability obligations in all FPAs, and d) ensuring that FPAs are consistent with or contribute to the poverty reduction and human development objectives identified in the EU's Country and Regional Strategy Papers.

Climate Change and Energy: the report calls for a systematic climate change risk assessment of all aspects of EU's policy planning and decision making, including trade, agriculture, food security, etc., and it demands that the result of this assessment be used to formulate clear and coherent country and regional strategy papers, as well as development programmes and projects.

It also calls on the Commission to report on the social sustainability of biofuels by the end of 2012 and to consult with affected communities and local NGOs beforehand. Member States are urged to allocate a significant share of the auctioning revenues from the European Emissions Trading System (ETS) to climate change-related activities in developing countries from 2013 onwards.

Security: the committee stresses the following:

- the publication of the Council's Thirteenth Annual Report on control of exports of military technology and equipment raised questions about the reliability and usability of the data provided;
- the relevance of the EU's pledges for democracy and human rights and for conditions such as those enshrined in the "more for more" approach concerning the EU's immediate Neighbourhood policy can only be assured when no other policy area, and when no interaction with partner countries, counteract initiatives undertaken to strengthen human rights, human security and democracy in partner countries.

Migration: noting that 'brain drain' can cause serious problems in developing countries, especially in the health sector, the report asks the Commission to **monitor the effects of the Blue Card system on developing countries** and promote the application of the "WHO Code of practice" regarding the international recruitment of health personnel to both the public and the private sectors.

Members also note that **mobility partnerships** must be consistent with the international human rights legal framework, and they ask the EU to prevent conditionality in development aid relating to migration reduction, in both bilateral and multilateral negotiations by the EU and its Member States. They want Article 13 of the ACP-EU Agreement to include the principles of circular migration and the granting circular visas. Whilst the article emphasises respect for human rights, the scope of these principles is seriously compromised by **bilateral readmission agreements** with transit countries which, taken together, amount to an externalisation by Europe of the management of migration, and which do not guarantee respect for the rights of migrants and may result in 'cascade' readmissions that jeopardise their safety and their lives.

Other issues: Members discuss a wide variety of issues, including: (i) the overall framework of good governance and respect for human rights, (ii) the division of responsibilities between the EEAS and DEVCO, (iii) the concept of "EU actorness", (iv) the need to ensure that social provisions enshrined in EU trade agreements are implemented; (v) the importance of establishing PCD focal points in developing countries to improve information exchanges, (vi) the importance of taking account of the situation of women, not simply as a vulnerable section of the population, but also as active facilitators of development policies.

Lastly, Members reiterate that the creation of a **Standing Rapporteur for PCD from the ACP countries** in the context of the Joint Parliamentary Assembly would facilitate the coordination with, and work of, the EP's Standing Rapporteur on PCD and the relevant department of the Commission and Council, and would help to eliminate obstacles to PCD within developing countries themselves.