EU strategy for the Horn of Africa

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The Committee on Foreign Affairs adopted the own-initiative report by Charles TANNOCK (ECR, UK) on the EU's Strategy for the Horn of Africa.

Members recall that the Horn of Africa faces a dual problem: the closely interconnected problems of **historically high levels of poverty due to food insecurity and recurrent human insecurity related to a lack of governance**. They also recall that, in March 2012, the Food and Agricultural Organisation (FAO) estimated that more than eight million people were in need of assistance in the Horn of Africa (including 3.2 million in Ethiopia, 2.5 million in Somalia, 2.2 million in Kenya and 180 000 in Djibouti) because of the serious drought in the region. They also underline the long history of conflict in this region, further exacerbated today by terrorism problems (piracy and kidnappings) which further impact on the under-development of this region of the world.

In this context, Members welcome the EU's Strategy for the Horn of Africa which is based on five prongs:

- building democratic, robust and accountable political structures in all countries of the Horn of Africa;
- working with the countries of the region and with regional and international actors and organisations to resolve conflicts;
- ensuring that existing insecurity in the region does not threaten the security of other neighbouring states;
- supporting efforts to promote economic growth and reduce poverty; and
- supporting political and economic regional cooperation.

Members insist in particular on the strengthening of good neighbourliness to overcome rivalry and border disputes, the need to bring an **end to the impunity** rife in these countries, as well as the full respect for international humanitarian law.

Welcoming the appointment of the European Union Special Representative (EUSR) for the Horn of Africa, Members call on the EU to actively support the work of the EUSR by ensuring adequate financial and human resources.

A number of international and/or institutional bodies are called upon to mobilise themselves to help the countries of the region, at the same time as the EU, both to strengthen the development of governance but also of the exploitation of essential natural resources, such as water. Members make reference in particular to the Inter-Governmental Authority on Development (IGAD) and AMISOM, (the African Mission to Somalia) that are combating Al Shabaab (Islamist militia).

Democratic transition: Members call on the Union institutions to remain vigilant and active in response to the political transition in Somalia, as well as in Ethiopia and Kenya. Election observation measures (EOM) are also called for in relation to the forthcoming vote in Kenya. Although they welcome the agreement reached between Sudan and South Sudan concerning petroleum resources, Members hope that this agreement will also finally resolve the problem of transit arrangements for oil from South Sudan.

Piracy and the security policy framework: Members deplore the very many acts of piracy that are committed in the region, as well as the impunity from which the perpetrators benefit, which means that most have still not been arrested or judged. They warmly welcome the UN report dated 25 January 2011 highlighting the proposals made by **Jacques Lang**, Special Adviser to the UN Secretary-General on legal

issues related to piracy off the coast of Somalia. They urge the HR/VP, the EUSR to act on these proposals.

Members also call for: (i) money flows to be monitored and for sums paid in ransoms to be confiscated if they are paid using European bank accounts; (ii) the development of cooperation between the *Atalanta* (military and diplomatic mission set in place by the European Union, in the context of the European naval force – EUNAVFOR) on the one hand, and EUROPOL and Interpol, on the other; (iii) strengthened collaboration between countries in the region and the International Criminal Court.

They particularly welcome the Council decision of 23 March 2012 prolonging EUNAVFOR Atalanta to December 2014 and extending its mandate to target the operational bases of pirates onshore. They invite Member States to ensure that EUNAVFOR ATLANTA is properly supported with **adequate surveillance and patrol ships**, so that progress made against piracy can be maintained. They also call on private maritime security companies to work in strict compliance with International Maritime Organisation standards.

Members call for strengthened cooperation between the *Atalanta* operation and other international missions active in the region, in particular the AMISOM land-based operation and NATO's *Ocean Shield* operation with a view to providing a truly global strategy to combat piracy in the Horn of Africa.

Other missions are also mentioned, including:

- the regional maritime capacity-building initiative, known as EUCAP Nestor, in order to strengthen the maritime and judicial capabilities in the Horn of Africa, but also in the western Indian Ocean;
- the EU's MARSIC project, under the Critical Maritime Routes Programme sponsored by the Instrument for Stability and the regional Maritime Security Programme (MASE), initiated by the countries of the Eastern and Southern Africa and Indian Ocean region and supported by the EU, and aimed at tackling piracy on land;
- the EU Training Mission (EUTM);
- other international coordination mechanisms such as the Contact Group on Piracy off the Coast of Somalia (CGPCS) in New York and the Shared Awareness and Deconfliction (SHADE) mechanism in Bahrain.

In regard to all these actions, Members call for greater cooperation and coherence in their implementation, including shared actions between the EU and the United States.

Reinforcing the comprehensive approach: Members welcome the EU strategy for the Horn of Africa, encompassing as it does not only security and humanitarian policy but also longer-term development policy. They call on the Commission and the Member States to coordinate their policies in this respect and to employ **joint programming** for the various countries and the region as soon as possible.

Given the Horn of Africa's strong potential, in particular in terms of minerals and agriculture, Members call on the Council, the Commission, the EEAS and the EIB, in coordination with other multilateral donors and financial institutions, to identify projects of common interest for the countries of the region, which could promote cooperation and positive interdependence, e.g. in the areas of **energy supply** and natural resources. Members call on the Commission to carry out an in-depth analysis of the dimension and impact in economic, environmental and social terms of practices of **land-renting to third countries in the Horn of Africa**, and to propose possible safeguard strategies and mechanisms.

Members take the view that boosting regional security and combating terrorism and piracy, while essential, **must not eclipse the absolute necessity of supporting as a first priority the eradication of poverty in the region**, particularly since the EU has an obligation under its founding Treaty to take account of the objectives of development cooperation. They note that all the countries of the Horn of

Africa are developing countries, and as such – apart from Sudan and South Sudan, which have not signed the Cotonou Agreement – have received EUR 2 billion in development aid (of which EUR 644 million went to Ethiopia alone) for indicative national and regional programmes under the 10th EDF. They consider that **the EU, as the world's main development aid and humanitarian aid distributor in the region**, thanks in part to the centralisation of its diplomatic activity in the EEAS and the EUSR, the success of Operation Atalanta, and the diplomatic and military presence in the region of certain Member States, **could do more to eradicate the endemic poverty in the region and the pockets of anarchy and lawlessness that exist there**.

Several initiatives are envisaged in this context to:

- support agriculture, pastoralism and cattle breeding in this region;
- support programmes for access to water; and
- improve drought-preparedness and crop yields.

Members insist that whenever possible assistance by the EU in the Horn of Africa **should not take the form of direct budgetary support**, but should be granted in order to achieve specific targets on the basis of clear performance indicators. They consider that when assistance has to take the form of budgetary support, this should be made conditional on the attainment of specific objectives. They believe that programmes directed at supporting the EU Strategy for the Horn of Africa should be able to benefit from the blending of resources, i.e. that funding for such programmes should be open to other international donors on the basis of clear common standards, so as to facilitate a coordinated, uniform approach by all donors. The EU should be **able to participate in the funding of third-party programmes in the region**, provided full respect for the rules on EU financial assistance to third countries can be ensured.

Members also call for humanitarian aid to vulnerable populations to be **neutral, impartial and independent**.

Once again, Members stress the importance of **respect for human rights** and fundamental freedoms constitutes an invariable element of the foundations of the Union's engagement with third-country partners. They are therefore deeply concerned at the reports of arbitrary arrests, mistreatment of prisoners and violence against demonstrators, as well as repressive measures against political opposition including censorship and the arbitrary detention of journalists and activists. Members stress the need to strengthen the rights of women, children, LGBT people and religious minorities and note that **sectarian Islamism has spread in parts of the Horn of Africa and is threatening minority freedoms**. They also underline the importance of European support for civil society.

Lastly, Members emphasise point by point the efforts to be made in each of the countries in the region stressing the importance of the actions undertaken both at international level as well as EU, and the need to ensure the **visibility of the EU's action** in this context.

- **Sudan and South Sudan:** Members call for: (i) measures to strengthen the national and international human rights framework in these two countries; (ii) the effective application of an official moratorium on executions with a view to abolishing the death penalty; (iii) the end of abuses against civilians by the military forces in the demilitarisation process; (iv) the establishment of a unified approach to addressing the protection of civilians in Darfur, Southern Kordofan and Blue Nile; (v) the end to any support provided by either Sudan or South Sudan to any armed group other than their respective regular armed forces;
- **Somalia:** welcoming the transition in Somalia, Members call on politicians in this country to ensure the formation of inclusive, broad-based governing institutions, stabilisation, the rule of law and good governance, economic recovery, peace-building and reconciliation. They also call on the High Representative and the EUSR for the Horn of Africa to critically review the Djibouti Peace Process and to consider deploying a team of mediators. They also call for the establishment of an

accountable, transparent and integrative police force, since this will consolidate trust of the population and solid economic structures. They stress the importance of the establishment of efficient **oil and gas exploitation** in this region. Further actions are also called to provide support to legitimate and democratic authorities in the field of institutional capacity building, using the positive example of Somaliland, so as to create a sustainable, stable and prosperous Somali federal state;

- **Ethiopia and Eritrea:** as far as these two countries which are undergoing fragile democratic transition, Members call for more dialogue, including between these two countries in order to effectively address border issues. They emphasise that all EU assistance should be made strictly conditional on a commitment by the Eritrean authorities to facilitate a democratic transition and the improvement of the human rights situation in the country. In this context, Members call for the immediate release of political prisoners, including the jailed journalist Dawit Isaac, who has been imprisoned without trial for over 4 000 days.