

Millennium development goals - defining the post-2015 framework

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The European Parliament adopted by 335 votes to 172, with 26 abstentions, a resolution on the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) – defining the post-2015 framework.

Parliament recalls that in 2015 one billion people, of whom 70% are women, will be living on less than USD 1.25 per day, especially in a number of African countries. Urgent measures must be taken to meet the challenge of ending global poverty.

Millennium Development Goals and new challenges: Parliament affirms that the MDGs defined in 2000 figure among many successes in middle-income countries and that the global landscape has dramatically changed over the last decade, with an increased gap and inequality between and within countries. It urges the EU to **lead with one strong voice** during the discussions on the post-2015 framework and up until the UN Summit and to adopt **a common, effective and ambitious position on the principles and goals that should be part of the new post-2015 development framework**. There must be a single, comprehensive and integrated framework, with clear benchmarks incorporating the key development and sustainability issues, and this framework must be universal in nature, promoting prosperity, human rights and well-being for all.

Parliament considers that this unified approach requires due coordination between the EU and its Member States before it is presented at the New York Autumn Summit. It recommends that the goals of the post-2015 development framework include the MDGs as well as the sustainable development goals (SDGs) and integrate specific objectives for women (who have not seen their situation progress), children, the elderly and persons with disabilities.

The resolution sets out the main challenges.

(1) Eradication of poverty: Members urge that poverty eradication, which is the primary objective of EU development cooperation, and the achievement of sustainable development must be **the imperative global priorities for the post-2015 development agenda**. They consider that the **structural causes** of poverty need to be addressed in order to bring real change to society. The resolution stresses that inclusiveness is a dynamic concept that goes beyond a “pro-poor” strategy, and implies broadening the focus to include **vulnerable populations in precarious livelihoods**. Defining qualitative indicators will be critical to monitor both the degree to which development progress is inclusive and sustainable, and the extent to which the needs of the most deprived and vulnerable groups are being addressed. Members call, in this connection, for a broader definition of poverty than one based on gross domestic product (GDP) alone.

(2) Health, nutrition, education and social protection: Parliament asks for the EU to strongly defend the right to the highest attainable standard of health, including sexual and reproductive health and rights and the integration of HIV/AIDS. It stresses that the post-2015 MDG framework must include a specific goal on the elimination of all forms of violence against women. Members underline that access to **universal health coverage (UHC)** - combining both treatment and a preventive approach -, **universal access to adequate nutritious food**, and **high quality education for all** and at all levels should be considered to be major goals of the post-2015 agenda. They insist on **targets** on the accessibility and affordability of quality health care and practical steps towards ensuring prevention and treatment care for the most marginalised groups. The resolution calls for action in the spheres of: (i) nutrition and food security, bearing in mind the role of women in this area; (ii) reduction of rates of maternal mortality and

awareness of sexual health; (iii) the education of women and girls; (iv) decent work opportunities supported through the implementation of national social protection floors; (v) the fight against non-transmissible diseases such as cancer. In addition, Parliament urges that the provision of EU humanitarian aid that contributes to the attainment of the MDGs and should effectively be excluded from the restrictions on humanitarian aid imposed by the USA or other donors, in particular by **ensuring access to abortion for women and girls who are victims of rape in armed conflicts**.

(3) Good governance: Parliament deplores the **lack of coherence** between institutions of global governance, in particular regarding the multilateral trade, finance and environmental architectures. Global governance deficits have led to policy fragmentation and inconsistency with multilateral regimes and international standards. More broadly, the resolution deems that action at the global level is required to supplement national efforts. It urges the international community to create a participatory environment within which civil society organisations (CSOs), the private sector, philanthropic foundations and other independent development partners, as well as national parliaments and local authorities are able to assume their responsibilities for the post-2015 framework.

In this respect, Members calls for a **human rights based approach** with the creation of an overarching equality goal that encompasses **peace and security**, as well as the **right to development**, while strengthening fragile States and those States affected by conflicts.

(4) Sustainability: Parliament calls on the EU to contribute, in an inclusive and transparent manner, to strengthening **coherence** between SDGs in the social and environmental spheres and post-2015 development goals. The final result should be **'one development agenda'**, avoiding duplication of efforts and resources. Parliament considers sustainability to be a major challenge. **Failure is likely to threaten all dimensions of human development** in view of the inseparable links between food, sustainable and secure access to energy, water, sustainable land use, efficient use of natural resources, the protection of marine and other ecosystems and biodiversity, and deforestation etc and human well being. Members stress the importance of universal access to safe drinking water and sanitation, and sustainable energy services for all.

Towards an EU position on the post-2015 development framework: once again, Parliament recalls the commitment made to allocate 0.7% of gross national income to official development assistance (ODA) by 2015, and stresses that this level has to be maintained in a future framework. It calls on all Member States to introduce this through **binding legislation** and to adopt multiannual budget timetables in order to reach the target. It reiterates its call for the creation of own resources, such as a financial transaction tax, a share of which should go to Heading IV of the EU budget. Parliament proposes that financing sources other than ODA be made available for **climate** finance.

In this respect, the resolution calls for **innovative financial mechanisms** for development, including through public-**private** partnerships, to create new partnerships. It also calls on the EU to encourage **social, ethical and environmentally friendly public procurement** at the international level as a tool for implementation of the post-2015 framework.

Members go on to stress the need for **strengthening domestic revenue through effective taxation and the fight against corruption**. There is an urgent need to increase support to developing countries when it comes to establishing effective fiscal policy and a sustainable tax base and to fight against tax havens and tax evasion.

The resolution points out that a new set of indicators other than GDP is necessary in order to achieve prosperity and development, including indicators such as the **human development index**, the poverty headcount ratio, the poverty gap index, and the Income Gini coefficient. Such **indicators** are crucial for monitoring and reporting on progress achieved in respect of poverty eradication.

Parliament considers that the principal aim of support to the **private sector** should be to lift people in developing countries out of poverty. It urges EU-based companies with production facilities in developing countries to comply with their obligations to respect human rights and freedoms, social and environmental standards, gender equality, core labour standards, international agreements and payment of taxes in a transparent manner. It calls for an end to all forms of child labour and the development of fair trade and for full and productive employment and decent work to be a central goal of the post-2015 development agenda.

Policy Coherence for Development (PCD) and coordination among donors: the resolution reiterates **the need for policy coherence** that takes a more integrated approach. It points out that **trade can be a fundamental driver of poverty reduction** and urges the EU, in this respect, to ensure that its trade policy is coherent with the EU's development goals.

It supports the idea of establishing a Global Economic Council in the context of the United Nations System. Members stress that turning “aid effectiveness” into a “development effectiveness” agenda implies a combination of development aid, assistance for the provision of global public goods and adaptation of existing global governance structures. The EU should act as a **driving force**, ensuring complementarity and division of labour within the development process in an inclusive and transparent manner.

Comprehensive guidance towards a post-2015 development framework: lastly, Parliament sets out the principles that the European Parliament should take into consideration in defining a coherent EU position:

- the architecture of the post-2015 development agenda should reflect new global, regional, national and local realities and challenges;
- the definition of the future agenda must be guided by the full participation and ownership of the developing and middle-income countries, while the new responsibilities and burdens generated need to be equally but justly shared between all countries;
- the future agenda should be **ambitious, universal, global in nature, multidimensional and flexible**, with targets tailored to each country with a limited number of concrete targets and measurable goals;
- respecting the principles of mutual responsibility, accountability, transparency, democracy, human rights, ownership, good governance, the rule of law, peace and security, equity and justice, and gender equality;
- the ability of all developing countries to fulfil their responsibility for the well-being of their citizens, lift the most vulnerable people out of poverty, fight inequality and at the same time uphold human rights principles;
- accelerating gender equality and the empowerment of girls and women at all levels of society;
- bringing together the economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development;
- mobilising all possible financial resources and innovative financing mechanisms for development, paying particular attention to: i) the fight against corruption, tax havens, tax evasion and avoidance and illicit capital flows; ii) the responsibilities of emerging economies in the development agenda, also encouraging south-south and triangular cooperation; iii) the improvement of monitoring mechanisms; iv) ODA; and v) PCD;
- including partners beyond the national government level to deliver an enabling environment to support real democratic ownership and a civil society;
- PCD for the success of a future framework;
- clear accountability mechanisms to make sure countries fulfil their commitments.