Framework Agreement on Partnership and Cooperation between the European Union and its Member States, of the one part, and Mongolia, of the other part

2016/2231(INI) - 15/02/2017 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament adopted by 619 votes to 63, with 15 abstentions, a non-legislative resolution on the draft Council decision on the conclusion of the Framework Agreement on Partnership and Cooperation between the European Union and its Member States, of the one part, and Mongolia, of the other part.

Parliament stressed that the EU and Mongolia have many converging positions regarding most major international challenges. It appreciated the friendly and constructive relations between the EU and Mongolia. Recognising Mongolia's specific geographical position between China, Russia and the countries of Central Asia and North-East Asia, with its importance for stability within the region, Members stressed the democratic transformation of country and of the challenges that exist in the areas of sustainable development and economy, finance, good governance, fighting corruption, social security and environmental protection and political polarisation.

Parliament recognised that the democratic transformation which commenced in the 1990s is continuing consistently and acknowledged the tangible progress made in terms of socio-economic reforms.

Parliament went on to highlight certain aspects of the draft framework agreement on partnership and cooperation:

Institutional framework and diplomatic representation: Parliament began by emphasising the need to **further enhance the parliamentary dimension of EU-Mongolia relations**. It regretted the absence from the PCA text of articles that would establish a Parliamentary Cooperation Committee (PCC) under the PCA to undertake democratic scrutiny of the implementation of the agreement and encouraged negotiations, therefore, on a **new protocol** to remedy the situation. Members were concerned at the fact that diplomatic relations with Mongolia are currently still being run from the EU Delegation to China. They urged the Council and the VP/HR to turn the European Union Liaison Office in Ulaanbaatar into a **fully-fledged EU Delegation**.

Democracy, the rule of law, good governance and human rights: whilst welcoming Mongolia's efforts to consolidate democratic progress and the rule of law, Parliament encouraged Mongolia to address the outstanding challenges of respect for independence of the judiciary. It recommended that the country strengthen its cooperation with the EU, the OSCE and the UN on dealing with corruption. It also recommended that Mongolia, in accordance with the already ratified Convention on the Rights of the Child, **legally ban corporal punishment**.

Parliament called for the respect for freedom of the media and freedom of expression in Mongolia and encouraged the Mongolian Parliament to codify such fundamental rights explicitly and to implement them under strong scrutiny.

Parliament commended the project supported by the EU in support of LGBTI rights in Mongolia even though it is worried by the ongoing discrimination and harassment committed against the LGBTI community.

Sustainable development: Members welcomed the substantial progress made by Mongolia in economic development and poverty reduction. They encouraged Mongolia in its efforts to achieve sustained economic growth, but expressed concern at the sharp slowdown in GDP growth, which in 2011 stood at record levels (17.3 %) but was only 2.3 % in 2015. Parliament welcomed the fact that EU development assistance to the country for 2014-2020 has been more than doubled – standing at EUR 65 million, in comparison with the 2007-2013 figure of EUR 30 million. It encouraged Mongolia's participation in **regional programmes financed** by the EU.

The resolution noted that in 2014 extractive industries in Mongolia accounted for 17 % of GDP and 89 % of the country's total exports. It welcomed, in this context, the active participation of Mongolia in the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI), which aims to make this sector more accountable and transparent.

Trade and economic relations: Parliament noted that the EU has become Mongolia's third-biggest trading partner, and that Mongolian goods already enter the EU market virtually tariff-free under the current Generalised Scheme of Preferences. It noted that European investment in Mongolia has so far remained limited, and encouraged the EU and Mongolia to intensify their trade and investment relations.

It encouraged further integration of Mongolia into the global and regional economy, within frameworks such as the Prairie Road, the Silk Road/'One Belt One Road' or the Trans-Eurasian Belt.

Parliament also stressed the importance of a stable business and legal environment for an increase in investment from the EU.

Regional and global challenges and cooperation: recognising the pivotal role Mongolia can play between the dynamic economies of China, Russia, South Korea and Japan and the Central Asian countries, and at the same time as an intermediary between Europe and the East Asian region, Parliament highlighted Mongolia's "third neighbour" foreign policy concept. This includes relations with the EU, balanced against constructive and intense relations with its influential strategic partners and direct neighbours Russia and China.

Lastly, it noted Mongolia's contribution to **UN peacekeeping** around the world and praised its role in bringing together academics from both Koreas, China and Russia, as well as for hosting reunions of families split by the division of the Korean peninsula.