Corruption and human rights in third countries

2017/2028(INI) - 13/09/2017 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament adopted by 578 votes to 19 with 68 abstentions a resolution on corruption and human rights in third countries.

The need for action: Parliament called for **collective action at national and international level** to prevent and combat corruption, given that corruption spreads across borders. It invited Member States to participate in international fora to reach joint decisions on best practices and policies tailored to the particular situation of each region.

Members called for the development of a **EU anti-corruption strategy**. They also called for the establishment of **effective policy and legal frameworks for the management of natural resource management** with special attention devoted to those capital flows which result from the extraction of ores and minerals from mines in conflict areas.

Corruption and human rights in EU bilateral relations: Parliament proposed the permanent monitoring of EU-funded projects and that recipient country authorities should be held accountable if EU funds are not used appropriately. The EU is invited in particular to:

- conduct **audits** of grants, loans and assistance packages, and carry out rigorous audits by governments and beneficiary organisations;
- incorporate an **anti-corruption clause** into agreements with third countries;
- develop **principles** to improve transparency, combat impunity and strengthen anti-corruption agencies;
- **provide funds** to support the implementation of programmes for civil society actors, including anti-corruption and human rights organisations, journalists, bloggers and whistle-blowers;
- consider legislation to establish clear criteria for **blacklisting** third-country nationals and members of their families who are guilty of serious human rights violations;
- bring the Magnitsky sanctions list against the 32 Russian state officials responsible for the death of Russian whistle-blower Sergei Magnitsky to the Council as soon as possible for its adoption.

The resolution also recommended:

- paving the way for the formation of task forces between Member States' embassies and EU Delegations in third countries, to **collect information from the European Union on corruption networks** and intermediaries;
- tackling the problems of organised crime, corruption and **money laundering within its own borders** by conducting self-assessments and regular reporting in accordance with the provisions of the United Nations Convention against Corruption and its review mechanism;
- **launching discussions at the UN level** on strengthening standards on the independence and mandates of anti-corruption agencies. Members supported the establishment of a UN Special Rapporteur on financial crime, corruption and human rights with a comprehensive mandate;
- adopting measures and improve coordination of strategies to combat **trafficking in human beings**;
- fully implementing the United Nations Guidelines on Business and Human Rights. Members recommended introducing standards and codes for monitoring compliance and combating corruption in companies;
- requiring companies to publish information on the **acquisition of land** in third countries and to upgrade their support to developing countries as a means to address corruption in land deals;

- ending serious abuses, including **electoral fraud** and corruption linked to electoral processes that threaten democracy, and to promote an independent, impartial and effective judiciary;
- ensuring that the **sporting governing bodies** and international anti-corruption agencies and NGOs cooperate in order to establish transparent and verifiable human rights commitments to be made by the organisers of major sporting events;
- applying a **'zero tolerance' policy to tax havens** and money laundering, in particular through the implementation of country-by-country reporting standards in Europe and third countries; multinationals would be required to submit reports in order to prevent corruption and tax evasion.

Lastly, following the recent '**Azerbaijani Laundromat'** revelations, Parliament strongly condemned attempts by Azerbaijan and other autocratic regimes in third countries to influence European decision-makers through illicit means. It called for a comprehensive Parliament investigation into the abovementioned allegations and, more broadly, into the influence exerted by such regimes.