Partnership and Cooperation Agreement between the EU and Iraq

2010/0310M(NLE) - 04/07/2018 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament adopted by 576 votes to 69, with 35 abstentions, a non-legislative resolution on the draft Council decision on the conclusion of a Partnership and Cooperation Agreement between the European Union and its Member States, of the one part, and the Republic of Iraq, of the other part.

Iraq is faced with a magnitude of the challenges that Iraq faces as it strives to make progress towards better governance, economic progress and national reconciliation. The EU has reaffirmed its commitment to building a strong partnership with Iraq, based on the Partnership and Cooperation Agreement, and to supporting the Iraqi authorities throughout the transition to democracy and reconstruction process, while also tackling the root causes of the political, social and economic instability. The reconstruction efforts have been estimated to cost as much as USD 88 billion. In this country of 26 million inhabitants, there are 11 million people in need of humanitarian aid.

Parliament welcomed the conclusion of a **Partnership and Cooperation Agreement** (PCA) between the EU and Iraq. It is an essential instrument for implementing the EU strategy for Iraq and for strengthening our cooperation in the country's reconstruction, stabilisation and reconciliation at national and local level. It also emphasised the importance of **Iraqi ownership** in the process of building a democratic, federal and pluralist state based on respect for human rights and rule of law.

Priorities of the EU action in Iraq: the resolution called on the EU and its Member States to:

- step up their efforts to urgently address key **humanitarian challenges** and human needs, in particular regarding the more than 3 million internally displaced persons (IDPs);
- focus development assistance, through targeted projects, on the **most vulnerable groups** and the people most in need, namely women and children, young people, IDPs and refugees;
- maintain the humanitarian assistance they are currently providing to help and protect all Iraqis affected by the conflicts, using aid as a means to help consolidate governance, democracy and rule of law and ensuring that financial assistance reaches those who need it;
- provide urgent financial assistance for the **reconstruction of priority infrastructure and the restoration of essential public services**, such as access to water and sanitation, electricity, education and healthcare. These reconstruction funds should be spread evenly among communities in need, regardless of the recipients' ethnic or religious identification, and channelled through legitimate state agencies rather than through sub-state actors;
- encourage the continuation of a dialogue between the central authorities and the authorities of the Kurdistan region of Iraq, in order to establish stable relations that satisfy both parties;
- provide support to preserve the diversity of Iraq's ethnic, cultural and religious identities.

Political dialogue and sectoral issues: Parliament called for the EU to strengthen its political dialogue with the Iraqi authorities in order to promote respect for human rights and the strengthening of democratic institutions through greater respect for the rule of law, good governance and an efficient judicial system. In this context, Members called for the **abolition of the death penalty** to be prioritised in this dialogue, and for a moratorium on the death penalty to be applied with immediate effect.

Particular attention should be paid to the representation of women, young people and people from all ethnic and religious groups of Iraqi society, including Christians, Shia and Sunni Muslims, Yazidis and Mandaeans, Shabak, Kurds, Turkmens and others, whose demands need to be addressed.

The EU is called on to:

- establish a **dialogue** on issues relating to the fight against terrorism with a view to reforming anti-terrorism legislation and strengthening the country's capacity to deal with terrorist threats;
- engage with Iraqi authorities in judicial cooperation programmes to effectively combat widespread **corruption** and ensure the fair distribution of national wealth;
- encourage the Iraqi authorities to adopt a **national strategy** to deal with crimes committed by Daesh and to accede to the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court (ICC);
- support a reform of the **judicial system** to ensure respect for international standards of respect for the law, fair trials and judicial independence;
- prioritise **gender equality** and the eradication of all violence and discrimination against women and girls, including gender-based violence;
- encourage and support Iraq in the diversification of its economy;
- set up a group of experts seeking to collect all evidence of any ongoing international crime, including genocide, wherever such crimes may be committed, in preparation for the international prosecution of those responsible;
- establish a dialogue with Iraq on **migration** in all its aspects;
- support Iraq in its energy transition;
- develop cooperation opportunities in the field of science and research, notably university cooperation and partnerships, in particular as regards Erasmus+.

Institutional relations: Parliament insisted that all assistance provided by the Union is subject to strict compliance with the **principles of respect for human rights** and the rule of law, and will be accompanied by a constant evaluation process, the results of which the European Parliament is to be duly informed of the Partnership and Cooperation Agreement.