Building EU capacity on conflict prevention and mediation

2018/2159(INI) - 12/03/2019 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament adopted by 402 votes to 163, with 89 abstentions, a resolution on building EU capacity on conflict prevention and mediation.

Recalling that the promotion of international peace and security was one of the EU’s raisons d'être, Members encouraged the EU to further prioritise conflict prevention and mediation in the framework or in support of existing agreed negotiating formats and principles.

They considered that the prevention of violent conflicts is an essential element of effective multilateralism, that it is an essential element of effective multilateralism and it is instrumental to achieving the sustainable development goals (SDGs) and that it contributes to affirming the Union's presence and credibility on the international scene.

The VP/HR, the President of the Commission and the President of the European Parliament are called on to set joint, long-term priorities in the area of conflict prevention and mediation, which should become part of a regular strategic programming exercise.

Enhancing the EU's institutional capacities

Stressing that the integrated approach to external conflicts and crises is the added value of the Union's external action, Members called for the:

- establishment, under the authority of the VP/HR, of an EU high-level advisory board on conflict prevention and mediation, with the aim of setting up a comprehensive pool of experienced senior political mediators and conflict prevention experts;

- establishment of a pool of experts who will focus on reconciliation and transitional justice;

- appointment of an EU Special Envoy for peace to chair the EU high-level advisory board, in order to promote coherence and coordination across the institutions.

- the systematic reconciliation, in all post-conflict areas, of the establishment of reconciliation and accountability mechanisms to ensure accountability for past crimes and to prevent and deter future crimes.

Members called for the establishment of a Council working group on conflict prevention and mediation, which underlines the Union's strong commitment to peace and stability in the surrounding regions. They also invited the EEAS to develop tools such as the early warning system and prospective analysis.

European Parliament

The resolution highlighted the role of the Democracy Support and Election Coordination Group, as well as its lead parliamentarians, as an operational body for the coordination of mediation and dialogue initiatives. In this context, it welcomed the partnership with the Ukrainian Parliament in the Jean Monnet dialogues and the new tripartite initiative of the Speakers of the Parliaments of Ukraine, Moldova and Georgia to establish a regional parliamentary assembly as an important platform for regional dialogue on strategic issues.

Parliament recommended that the existing parliamentary training and coaching programmes available for Members of the European Parliament, particularly those appointed as mediators or Chief Observers, as well as training programmes for third country parliamentarians, political parties and staff, be further developed, including those on gender and youth aspects.

Members believe that the appointment of a vice-president to coordinate mediation and facilitate dialogue activities and to work closely with the Democracy Support and Election Coordination Group would strengthen Parliament's capacity. They also called for an increase in the prize money awarded to the European Parliament's Sakharov Prize during the next parliamentary term

Women, peace and security

Violent conflict and war have a disproportionate impact on civilians, particularly women and children, and put women at greater risk than men of economic and sexual exploitation, forced labour, displacement, detention and sexual violence. The active participation of women and young people is important for conflict prevention and peacebuilding as well as in the prevention of all forms of violence, including sexual and gender-based violence.

Parliament recommended in particular:

- ensuring the participation of women, girls and young people and the protection of their rights across the conflict cycle, from conflict prevention to post-conflict reconstruction, in the context of EU conflict prevention and mediation activities;

- taking into account the implementation of full gender equality in all exercises in cooperation, training and intervention. Members welcomed the EU initiatives in this regard, as well as its active contribution to the next Gender Action Plan, and the new EU Strategic Approach to women, peace and security;

- including expertise on gender, including gender-based violence and conflict-related sexual violence, in all stages of conflict prevention, the mediation process and peacebuilding;

- considering that the role of civil society organisations should be taken into account in the EU’s overall approach and its priorities for capacity development.

Lastly, Parliament stressed the need for sufficient and earmarked financial resources to be made available for the EU’s conflict prevention and mediation actions under the next multiannual financial framework (2021-2027).