Recommendation to the Commission and the Commission Vice President/High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy on the Renewed partnership with the Southern Neighbourhood. A new agenda for the Mediterranean

2022/2007(INI) - 14/09/2022 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament adopted by 488 votes to 37, with 106 abstentions, a European Parliament recommendation to the Commission and the Vice-President of the Commission/High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy on the renewed partnership with the Southern Neighbourhood - a new agenda for the Mediterranean.

The EU's investment in its Southern Neighbourhood is a priority. The security, stability, prosperity and climate resilience of the Union's Southern Neighbourhood will enhance the EU's security, stability, prosperity and climate resilience. The COVID-19 crisis and the food security implications of the war in Ukraine have increased the risk of further destabilisation, as its socio-economic consequences are severe for Southern Neighbourhood countries. Moreover, stressing the need to further diversify and decarbonise the EU’s energy supply, the role of the Southern Neighbourhood is essential as a crucial partner of the EU in securing sufficient gas and oil supplies to the EU in the short term. Therefore, renewed investment in the Southern Neighbourhood and the intensification of the political and strategic dialogue between the EU and the countries of the Southern Neighbourhood will provide an opportunity for close cooperation and synergies between policies for the benefit of both the EU and its Member States and the countries of the Southern Neighbourhood.

Parliament made a **number of recommendations to the Commission and the VP/HR** regarding the renewed partnership with the Southern Neighbourhood, a new agenda for the Mediterranean, including:

- securing adequate resources for a rapid and effective implementation of the new Mediterranean programme, based on the objectives and priorities defined jointly with the Southern Neighbourhood partner countries;

- presenting annual updates on the implementation of the new agenda for the Mediterranean and ensure EU visibility in all EU financial resources allocated to the region directly or indirectly through partnerships with the UN, other international organisations, and other traditional and non-traditional partners;

- strengthening the EU's dialogue and cooperation with the countries of the Southern Neighbourhood in relevant policy areas such as **climate change, renewable energy sources** and promote conflict prevention, peace-building, counter-piracy, maritime security and the fight against terrorism, radicalisation and extremism;

- engaging in dialogue with the Parliament on ways to ensure food security for the Southern Mediterranean countries facing difficulties in this regard and draw up a robust response for this purpose without further delay;

- prioritising the implementation of strategies to alleviate poverty, increase access to school and higher education for young people and women and ensure adequate funding for schooling for the population at large, and support the development of efficient higher education and vocational training structures;

- target EU support to women with the aim of improving and securing their access to education, training and employment and, more generally, to promote equal professional and socio-economic opportunities;

- ensuring that the EU, its Member States and its Southern Neighbourhood partners implement migration policies that fully respect the human rights of migrants and refugees, as enshrined in international law and regional and national legislation;

- inviting the EU and its Southern Neighbourhood partners to adopt a more coordinated, holistic and structured approach to migration, taking into account the importance of addressing the root causes of forced displacement, to strive to reduce the number of irregular entries into the territory of the Member States and, in the context of relations with third countries, to prioritise the readmission of migrants who do not have a right to remain in the EU, in compliance with non-refoulement obligations and international law;

- enhancing the **interconnection capacity** between the EU and southern and eastern Mediterranean countries producing natural gas and other types of energy, through EU hubs, and promote electrical interconnection;

- developing a concrete strategy to counter disinformation and propaganda from Russia, China and other regional powers, both in the countries of the Southern Neighbourhood and in the EU;

- including economic and labour rights in the new agenda and focus on decent work, sustainable development and international labour standards;

- implementing the new agenda for the Mediterranean by strengthening the Union's support for a free, strong and independent civil society throughout the Mediterranean;

- creating a strong framework for dialogue and cooperation across the Mediterranean for the preservation and promotion of cultural heritage;

- encouraging reforms in the fields of democracy, rule of law, human rights, good governance and the fight against corruption, and reaffirmed its condemnation of the use of the **death penalty**.