EU-India relations

2023/2128(INI) - 17/01/2024 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament adopted by 585 votes to 10, with 36 abstentions, a recommendation to the Council, Commission and the Vice-President of the Commission / High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy concerning EU-India relations.

The EU and India intend to convene at leaders' meeting in New Delhi in early 2024, in particular to reaffirm the commitments of both sides to their strategic partnership and to review the implementation of the EU-India Roadmap 2025.

Parliament made the following **recommendations** to the Council, Commission and the Vice-President of the Commission / High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy:

The EU-India Strategic Partnership: the institutional framework

- continue to broaden and deepen EU-India relations as strategic partners and to uphold the commitment to regular multi-level dialogues and summits;

- pursue a 'Team Europe' approach to the partnership;

- make tangible advances on priority areas of the partnership, in particular climate change and green growth, digitalisation and new technologies, research and development, connectivity, trade and investment, foreign, security and defence policy and human rights and the rule of law;

- begin to develop an ambitious, multi-faceted and thoroughly renewed partnership and cooperation strategy based on the values of freedom, democracy, pluralism, the rule of law, equality, respect for human rights, social justice and sustainable development;

- establish a more structured and multi-level inter-parliamentary dialogue between the European Parliament and its Indian counterparts.

EU-India cooperation on foreign and security policy

- further develop both parties' growing cooperation on foreign and security policy and promote greater synergies in this field through existing dialogue mechanisms and other fora set up under the EU-India Roadmap to 2025;

- hold bilateral security dialogues on an annual basis and ensure, further, that this increasingly prominent component of the partnership effectively promotes shared security, stability and peaceful development in the Indo-Pacific region;

- encourage India to strengthen regional security cooperation while acknowledging the volatile context of proliferation, military modernisation, and territorial disputes;

- enhance cooperation on hybrid threats, particularly in the fight against disinformation campaigns, through mechanisms aiming to share evidence and intelligence;

- expand and broaden EU-India cooperation on maritime security and recognise India's contributions to freedom of navigation worldwide, as well as its recent deployment of navy ships to protect merchant vessels in the Red Sea that have been facing ongoing harassment by Houthi rebels;

- strengthen EU-India cooperation on disarmament and non-proliferation and encourage India to join EU efforts to promote nuclear safety and the non-proliferation of nuclear, chemical and biological weapons in the region;

- engage with India on the issue of its heavy military dependency on Russia and on the EU's sanctions policy towards Russia and on its continued purchases of crude oil from Russia at low prices and its subsequent sale of refined oil products on international markets, as well as its involvement in the trade in Russian diamonds.

Human rights and democracy

- effectively enshrine human rights and democratic values at the heart of the EU's engagement with India with the aim of a constructive and results-based dialogue;

- develop a strategy and plan of action to address these issues, and to integrate them across the wider EU-India partnership;

- express serious concern about India's Citizenship Amendment Act and other laws that discriminate on grounds of religion, encourage India to guarantee the right to freely practice the religion of one's choice and counter hate speech that incites discrimination or violence against any religious minority;

- engage with India on its efforts to investigate and prevent gender-based violence and discrimination and promote gender equality and women's empowerment;

- work with India to ensure a safe and democratic environment for the work of defenders of human rights, the environment, the rights of indigenous peoples and Dalit rights, political opponents and trade union activists, journalists and other civil society actors;

- reiterate that any free trade agreement with India should be based on prior human rights and sustainable development impact assessments carried out by both parties.

Connecting on climate, energy and digital issues

- enhance cooperation on climate and energy issues with India as a key partner in the global fight against climate change and biodiversity degradation and in a green transition towards renewable energy and climate neutrality, with due regard to their impact on the most vulnerable;

- step up cooperation in high performance computing and quantum technologies and recognise the substantial potential of digital issues as part of the EU-India partnership. The EU is better placed to advance global standards in the digital sector;

- step up engagement with India on health emergencies, pharmaceuticals and digital health innovations for universal health coverage, as it is the largest producer and exporter of generic medicine and an active player on global health matters in multilateral fora.