European Communities' development policy: revision of the "development" Council's declaration adopted on the 10 November 2000

2004/2261(INI) - 24/10/2005

The committee adopted the own-initiative report drawn up by Anders WIJKMAN (EPP-ED, SE) in response to the Commission's policy paper on EU development policy (proposal for a Joint Declaration entitled "The European Consensus"). The report emphasised that the overall objective of EU development cooperation should be the reduction and ultimately the eradication of poverty within the framework of sustainable development. It stressed that the concept of poverty was multidimensional - "relating inter alia to human capabilities such as consumption and food security, health, education, rights, the ability to be heard, human security, social justice, dignity and decent work". Consequently, combating poverty would only be successful if issues such as prevention and treatment of HIV/AIDS, malaria and tuberculosis, the promotion of sexual and reproductive health, gender equality and women's rights, climate change mitigation, trade reform, conflict prevention democracy and good governance (with priority being given to anti-corruption) were effectively addressed.

MEPs deplored the lack of consistency in development policy within the EU, leading to high transaction costs, duplication of work and complications for partner countries. They expressed support for efforts to improve coordination, harmonisation and alignment of the ways in which donors plan and deliver aid as set out in the Paris Declaration, and said that such efforts should be applied to middle income countries as well. However, they stressed that the proposed Joint Declaration was far too vague as regards implementation.

Finally, the committee welcomed the emphasis on the proper sequencing of market opening in developing countries, but stressed that this entailed the right of developing countries to design the pace and directions of trade liberalisation on the basis of their development goals.