Resolution on the Global Call to Action: making poverty history

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In this resolution, the MEPs welcome the UK Presidency’s commitment to prioritise development and the fight against poverty with a special focus on Africa. They also note the critical role that civil society organisations have to play and welcome the initiative of the worldwide alliance ‘The Global Call to Action against Poverty’ which brings together more than 600 NGOs from around the world.

Parliament welcomes the G8 commitment to debt cancellation for Highly Indebted Poor Countries, but they warn that "debt relief is no panacea in the fight against poverty." Other measures are also needed, such as improving the quality and efficiency of aid, the fight against corruption and greater transparency.

MEPs support the increase in EU aid spending approved by the Council on 16-17 June. However, they call for better use of existing aid, notably through the reorganisation of priorities to focus on the Millennium Development Goals. They say the EU and its Member States should devote at least 20 per cent of their aid to health and education projects.

The EU should also ensure that its internal policies are compatible with its international commitments. For example, during negotiations at the WTO, it should, along with other industrialised countries, give developing countries better access to its markets - whether for agriculture, industry or services - and set a timetable for the abolition of agricultural export subsidies.

Finally, to improve the visibility of the EU's development aid activity, MEPs want the Union to fund a number of particular causes, such as vaccination of children and the fight against malaria, in partnership with the relevant organisations.