EU/South Africa relations: strategic partnership

2006/2234(INI) - 24/10/2006 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament adopted a resolution based on the own-initiative report drafted by Luisa **Morgantini** (GUE/NGL, IT)and welcomed the Commission's approach on an EU-South Africa Strategic Partnership. It felt that the new approach moved from political dialogue to strategic political cooperation in which South Africa was identified as the 'anchor country' capable of pursuing shared objectives on regional, African and global issues, taking into account the fact that South Africa plays an important role as spokesperson for Sub-Saharan African countries in international fora such as the WTO and the United Nations. The Strategic Partnership should:

-provide a single framework under which the existing cooperation instruments could improve performance in the interests of the South African population and economy;

-be complementary to the EU-Africa Strategy and incorporate existing strands of work on the Development Cooperation Instrument, Economic Partnership Agreements (EPAs) and other ongoing negotiations.

The Action Plan should have poverty alleviation as its overriding objective. Parliament stressed that tackling the HIV/AIDS crisis, with a balanced approach between prevention (with an emphasis on sexual and reproductive health), treatment and cure, must remain a political priority for the South African Government. It welcomed the Government's decision in favour of a programme to deliver anti-retroviral drugs, but nonetheless insisted that its implementation be urgently improved.

Parliament went on to call on South Africa to clarify the relationship between SADC, SACU and TDCA, with a view to devising a more orderly regional development policy. The Commission should clarify EU policy in relation to SADC, SACU and TDCA, taking into account the EPA negotiations.

Emphasising the specific political role which South Africa was already playing for the whole continent (e. g. for Sudan, Congo, Liberia), Parliament considered that this position had to be supported by the EU. It hoped for further development of the African Union and called on South Africa to use this political influence to bring about a peaceful settlement of the crisis in its neighbouring country Zimbabwe.