Basic information

2002/2120(COS) COS - Procedure on a strategy paper (historic)	Procedure completed
Relations EU/Asia: enhanced partnerships, strategic framework **Subject** 6.40.08 Relations with Asian countries	

Key players

European Parliament

Committee responsible	Rapporteur	Appointed
AFET Foreign Affairs, Human Rights, Common Security, Defense	MAATEN Jules (ELDR)	21/11/2001

Committee for opinion	Rapporteur for opinion	Appointed
ITRE Industry, External Trade, Research, Energy	The committee decided not to give an opinion.	
DEVE Development and Cooperation	The committee decided not to give an opinion.	

Council of the European Union

European Commission

Commission DG	Commissioner
External Relations	

Key events

Date	Event	Reference	Summary
04/09/2001	Non-legislative basic document published	COM(2001)0469	Summary
10/06/2002	Committee referral announced in Parliament		
11/07/2002	Vote in committee		Summary
11/07/2002	Committee report tabled for plenary	A5-0270/2002	
04/09/2002	Debate in Parliament		
05/09/2002	Decision by Parliament	T5-0408/2002	Summary
05/09/2002	End of procedure in Parliament		

13/11/2003	Final act published in Official Journal		

Technical information	
Procedure reference	2002/2120(COS)
Procedure type	COS - Procedure on a strategy paper (historic)
Procedure subtype	Commission strategy paper
Legal basis	Rules of Procedure EP 148
Stage reached in procedure	Procedure completed
Committee dossier	AFET/5/16294

Documentation gateway

European Parliament

Document type	Committee	Reference	Date	Summary
Committee report tabled for plenary, single reading		A5-0270/2002	11/07/2002	
Text adopted by Parliament, single reading		T5-0408/2002 OJ C 272 13.11.2003, p. 0410-0476 E	05/09/2002	Summary

European Commission

Document type	Reference	Date	Summary
Non-legislative basic document	COM(2001)0469	04/09/2001	Summary

Relations EU/Asia: enhanced partnerships, strategic framework

2002/2120(COS) - 04/09/2001 - Non-legislative basic document

PURPOSE : to present the communication from the Commission on a strategic framework for enhanced partnerships between European and Asia. CONTENT : the Commission first set out an overall framework for EC relations with Asian countries in its 1994 Communication "Towards a New Asia Strategy". The present Communication updates that strategy, taking account of key developments in the intervening years, and establishing a comprehensive strategic framework for our relations with Asia and its subregions in the coming decade. After commenting on the major economic, political and social changes in Asia, Europe and the world in recent years, the Communication takes stock of the development of EU-Asia relations since 1994. Political dialogue with key partners in the region has intensified, and trade and investment relations have expanded (notwithstanding the impact of the East Asian Crisis). There has been a modest growth in development and economic cooperation with Asian countries. But much remains to be done, for example in deepening and broadening political dialogue, in enhancing bilateral trade and investment relations and strengthening cooperation in the WTO, and in ensuring that aid programmes in Asia can achieve their full potential. The degree of mutual awareness between the two regions remains insufficient. Taking account of the above, the present Communication proposes that an overall strategic framework for relations with Asia in the coming decade should be set out based on the core objective of strengthening the EU's political and economic presence across the region, and raising this to a level commensurate with the growing global weight of an enlarged EU. In particular, the Commission should work to: - contribute to peace and security in the region and globally, through a broadening of engagement with the region; - further strengthen mutual trade and investment flows with the region; - promote the development of the less prosperous countries of the region, addressing the root causes of poverty; - contribute to the protection of human rights and to the spreading of democracy, good governance and the rule of law; - build global partnerships and alliances with Asian countries, in appropriate international fora, to help address both the challenges and the opportunities offered by globalisation and to strengthen our joint efforts on global environmental and security issues; - and help strengthen the awareness of Europe in Asia (and vice versa). These general objectives and priorities are elaborated further in a series of specific action points for the region as a whole, and for each of the four key sub-regions (South Asia, South- East Asia, North-East Asia, Australasia). This overall strategic framework (which may subsequently be amplified through specific subregional strategies as appropriate, as well as through the Country Strategy Papers focusing on development cooperation), will also

serve as an important input for a proposed revision of the ALA Regulation in the first semester of 2002 (following on an overall evaluation now commencing). Looking forward, it will be important to take stock of progress on a regular basis, and it is suggested that thestrategy may usefully be reviewed, and adapted as necessary, in five or six years' time. For this strategic framework to be fully effective, it is essential that there is a proper consistency between the objectives being set, and the resources available to meet them. The first priority is to ensure that the available resources are used in an effective and timely fashion, implementing fully the ongoing reform of our external assistance. Once this has been achieved, it will be better able to address the longer-term question of whether and to what extent the level of resources available for our cooperation activities with Asia should be increased.

Relations EU/Asia: enhanced partnerships, strategic framework

2002/2120(COS) - 05/09/2002 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament voted 440 to 11 with 30 abstentions in favour of the report by Mr Jules MAATEN (ELDR, NL) setting out a strategic framework for enhanced partnership between Europe and Asia with a strong emphasis on respect for human rights and democracy. In view of the importance of the region and links with Europe, Parliament expects Council to set out clear priorities for the EU's policy towards Asia. Parliament recognises ASEM (the Asia-Europe Meeting) as a valuable potential instrument for practical co-operation but feels that its objectives need to be clarified. It also finds it regrettable that democracies such as India and Taiwan are not part of the organisation and urges the EU to find ways of bringing Taiwan into ASEM. At the same time it calls for regular parliamentary oversight of ASEM by the Asia-Europe parliamentary meeting. In this context, MEPs welcome the recent Asia/Europe Parliamentary meeting (ASEP II) and are proposing preparatory parallel meetings for ASEM summits. In addition, the resolution urges Europe and Asia to hold a dialogue on global challenges post-September 11 and to try and reduce tension between India and Pakistan. Mutual respect between cultures and religions must be encouraged, in particular in countries such as Malaysia and Indonesia, so that they opt for a moderate form of Islam. On the economic front, MEPs give their backing to economic co-operation programmes, especially for SMEs, but are critical of the relatively low level of EU aid to Asia and believe that these resources should in any case be better distributed. They welcome the fact that new EU delegations are to be opened soon in the region. However, they repeat their demand for a trade office to be opened in Taiwan and call on the Commission to start the negotiation process needed to conclude an EU-Taiwan free trade agreement. As regards the civil society, the Parliament stresses that, by virtue of the cooperation agreements between the European Union, Vietnam and Laos, respect for democratic principles and human, civil and political rights by the authorities of these countries can no longer be seen as a question solely regarding Laos or Vietnam, but must become a matter of direct concern to the Union and its citizens; regrets that the Commission has generally side-stepped this problem, including in the recent strategy papers it has drawn up on these countries. Furthermore, it urges China to eliminate all human rights abuses and to lift restrictions on the media and freedom of expression; It also reaffirms the extreme importance of the it attaches to all measures designed to combat the greenhouse effect, and calls on the Council and Commission to propose to the countries of Asia new joint initiatives which take account of the specific needs of developing countries. In its conclusions, the Parliament reiterates its longstanding support for the ASEP process and calls for parallel, prior ASEP meetings before ASEM Summits to allow for parliamentary discussion and oversight; it therefore agrees to consider hosting ASEP III prior to ASEM V in Hanoi in 2004. Its call, now more valid than ever, for a change in attitude towards Asia, based on the realisation of the need for a mutually respectful partnership with Asian nations and stresses that a such a partnership shouldbe based on respect for human rights, which are the foundation for stable relations between nations. Lastly, it urges the Members of the ASEM process to continue and intensify the political dialogue on human rights, democracy and the rule of law so that the common basis for cooperation among the Member States and towards third countries is strengthened. It states, in conclusion, the need for the EU to be seen as a credible partner, one moderated by the necessary balance, consistency and commitment in its opening-up of further avenues towards greater East-West coherence.