Basic information

2003/2049(INI) INI - Own-initiative procedure	Procedure completed
European Union and United Nations relations **Subject** 6.40.13 Relations with/in the context of international organisations: UN, OSCE, OECD, Council of Europe, EBRD	

Key players

European Parliament

Committee responsible	Rapporteur	Appointed
AFET Foreign Affairs, Human Rights, Common Security, Defense	LASCHET Armin (PPE-DE)	25/03/2003

Committee for opinion	Rapporteur for opinion	Appointed
DEVE Development and Cooperation	The committee decided not to give an opinion.	

Key events

Date	Event	Reference	Summary
13/03/2003	Committee referral announced in Parliament		
26/11/2003	Vote in committee		Summary
26/11/2003	Committee report tabled for plenary	A5-0480/2003	
29/01/2004	Decision by Parliament	T5-0037/2004	Summary
29/01/2004	Debate in Parliament		
29/01/2004	End of procedure in Parliament		

Technical information

Procedure reference	2003/2049(INI)
Procedure type	INI - Own-initiative procedure
Procedure subtype	Initiative
Legal basis	Rules of Procedure EP 55
Stage reached in procedure	Procedure completed
Committee dossier	AFET/5/19344

Documentation gateway				
European Parliament				
Document type	**Committee**	**Reference**	**Date**	**Summary**
Committee report tabled for plenary, single reading		A5-0480/2003	26/11/2003	
Text adopted by Parliament, single reading		T5-0037/2004 OJ C 096 21.04.2004, p. 0018-0079 E	29/01/2004	Summary
European Commission				
Document type		**Reference**	**Date**	**Summary**
Document attached to the procedure		COM(2003)0526	10/09/2003	Summary

European Union and United Nations relations

2003/2049(INI) - 10/09/2003 - Document attached to the procedure

PURPOSE : to present a new strategy for EU-UN relations. CONTENT : the Commission has presented a new strategy for EU-UN relations. The paper puts forward practical ways in which, by working through the UN system, the EU can strengthen its position as a central pillar of the multilateral system. The Communication presents a series of concrete ways of improving the way the EU engages with the UN system: - improving the EU co-ordinating mechanisms in Brussels, New York, Geneva and Vienna, - establishing early contacts/co-operation between EU services and those of UN agencies, including hands-on co-operation in the field. It should be noted that the EC budget provides some EUR 300 million per year for UN agencies, e.g. for development (UNDP) and humanitarian (WFP) assistance. When combined with national contributions from Member States, the EU is the largest contributor to UN operations. The European Union's significant weight, which is bound to increase with enlargement, gives the EU the opportunity, as well as the responsibility, to make proactive suggestions in the UN reform debate. The Communication builds on the extensive EU-UN co-operation that has developed in recent years across a wide range of policy areas. High-level political dialogue now involves regular meetings between the UN Secretariat and the Council, Commission and High Representative for CFSP. In addition, the EU and the UN already work together on development and humanitarian aid. This cooperation should expand to other areas. The point of departure of this Communication is the European Union's attachment to multilateral solutions on issues as varied as international security and climate change as a fundamental principle of its external relations. Equally, it notes that the EU's ability to influence multilateral debates has at times lagged behind its economic and combined political clout. Proposals : the Communication sets out three ways in which the EU could contribute more effectively to the work of the UN: 1) by taking the lead in the negotiation and implementation of key UN targets and instruments : the EU should apply the proactive approach it has shown on issues such as the Kyoto Protocol, the International Criminal Court or Financing for Development, much more widely in areas such as counter-terrorism, weapons of mass destruction, or human rights. It also commits the Commission to looking at how the implementation of multilateral targets can be integrated more systematically into the EU's external assistance programmes; 2) by moving towards a more systematic policy of partnership with the UN in the field : the Communication calls for a strengthened partnership with the UN in areas like human rights and conflict prevention, where concrete co-operation between the EU and the UN has yet to be developed more extensively, as well as in the field of crisis management, where the Italian Presidency has already initiated work towards reaching a framework agreement with the UN. The Communication calls in particular for regular upstream concertation on the EC's and UN's respective country-level assessments and programming, for action to make training standards compatible, and for regular joint training activities and exchanges of personnel; 3) by giving itself the means to become a dynamic, flexible and coherent force in policy debates in the UN : the EU has emerged in a short period of time as a visible presence at the UN, capable of arriving at common, coordinated positions in most UN policy forums (such as the General Assembly or many specialised agencies). However, it points to the factors which still prevent the EU from 'punching at its weight' in the UN, such as the persistence of occasional split votes by EU Member States in key UN bodies or the lack of effective EU coordination in certain multilateral forums which are crucial to the EU's sustainable development agenda. The Communication sets out concrete proposals for addressing these issues such as: - giving relevant Council groups in Brussels a strong role in determining EU policy in the main UN bodies; - moving towards a flexible, mandate-based approach for the EU's participation in UN negotiations; - extending EU coordination to all parts of the UN system. In this context, the Communication also covers some sensitive issues surrounding CFSP and the Security Council on which the Commission role is limited. However, the Communication suggests more can be done to improve the coherence of the EU foreign policy within the limits or Article 19 of the Treaty, which contains significant obligations for Member States to consult each other and to defend agreed EU positions on issues that are discussed in the Security Council. The Communication addresses this issue in the light of the Convention, aiming at a stepped up presentation of common EU positions in all UN bodies, including the Security Council, including: - a reinforced role for the future Foreign Minister in bringing Member States' positions together to avoid split votes on Security Council resolutions; - a clearer arrangement regarding the presentation of agreed EU positions in the Security Council; - a more proactive consultation/concertation among Member States with a view to maximising the degree

of consensus on matters discussed in Security Council. The Commission will now look to the Council and the Parliament for a wide-ranging debate on taking forward the concrete proposals contained in the Communication, many of which will require a concerted effort by the main EU institutions involved in external relations.

European Union and United Nations relations

2003/2049(INI) - 29/01/2004 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament adopted a resolution based on the own-initiative report drafted by Armin LASCHET (EPP-ED, D) on relations between the European Union and the United Nations. (Please see the document dated 26/11/03.) Parliament welcomed the Commission's communication but regretted that the Commission did not make any recommendation regarding the development of the cooperation between the UN and the European Parliament. As well as reform of Security Council representation, Parliament stated that reform should include making relations between the UN Secretary-General and the International Court of Justice more flexible by giving the former possibility to ask for the legal advice of the Court. Parliament also suggested improving law enforcement at the level of the Security Council (enforcement of its resolutions) and of the International Court of Justice. Furthermore, the Council should reflect on the possibility to propose the participation of the EU as a full member in the Security Council and the General Assembly of the UN. Parliament went on to stress that enhancing the EU's role within the UN would demand Joint agreement among EU institutions on the political sectors where the EU should have a front-runner role in the definition of the UN politics. These include the articulation of the UN with other international organisations such as NATO. In addition, parliament felt that, in the event of genocide, war crimes and crimes against humanity, it must be possible for the United Nations to be authorised to intervene rapidly. The possibility must be created of circumventing the veto of a permanent member of the Security Council should an independent body endowed with legitimacy under international law (for instance, the International Court of Justice or the International Criminal Court) establish that there is an imminent danger of the abovementioned crimes being committed. Parliament moved on to discuss the need to clarify the relations between the EU Council and its Member States represented in the UN Security Council. These could be dealt with within the framework of a code of conduct. Such a code should underline that whenever an EU statement is presented on behalf of the European Union or the European Community, EU Member States should refrain from making their national statements, which should only be envisaged on an exceptional basis and justified in advance to the EU Presidency. Finally, Parliament proposed that the Council and the Commission organise joint meetings between representatives of the EU Presidency, the Secretariats of the Council, the Commission and the European Parliament with representatives of the UN. These meeting would coordinate and, wherever possible, do joint country assessments in terms of conflict prevention, the functioning of an "early warning system" and implementation of the crisis management mechanisms available in the EU and the UN.