Basic information

2004/2169(INI) INI - Own-initiative procedure	Procedure completed
EU-India relationship: a strategic partnership **Subject** 6.20.03 Bilateral economic and trade agreements and relations 6.40.08 Relations with Asian countries **Geographical area** India	

Key players

European Parliament

Committee responsible	Rapporteur	Appointed
AFET Foreign Affairs	MENÉNDEZ DEL VALLE Emilio (PSE)	13/09/2004

Committee for opinion	Rapporteur for opinion	Appointed
DEVE Development	SCHMIDT Frithjof (Verts/ALE)	06/10/2004
INTA International Trade	PAPASTAMKOS Georgios (PPE-DE)	30/09/2004
LIBE Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs	The committee decided not to give an opinion.	

Key events

Date	Event	Reference	Summary
16/06/2004	Non-legislative basic document published	COM(2004)0430	Summary
28/10/2004	Committee referral announced in Parliament		
13/07/2005	Vote in committee		Summary
29/07/2005	Committee report tabled for plenary		
01/08/2005	Committee report tabled for plenary	A6-0256/2005	
28/09/2005	Debate in Parliament		
29/09/2005	Decision by Parliament	T6-0364/2005	Summary

29/09/2005	Results of vote in Parliament		
29/09/2005	End of procedure in Parliament		

Technical information	
Procedure reference	2004/2169(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/6/23670

Documentation gateway

European Parliament

Document type	Committee	Reference	Date	Summary
Committee opinion	INTA	PE350.224	25/02/2005	
Committee opinion	DEVE	PE353.351	21/03/2005	
Amendments tabled in committee		PE360.075	28/06/2005	
Committee report tabled for plenary, single reading		A6-0256/2005	01/08/2005	
Text adopted by Parliament, single reading		T6-0364/2005 OJ C 227 21.09.2006, p. 0524-0589 E	29/09/2005	Summary

European Commission

Document type	Reference	Date	Summary
Non-legislative basic document	COM(2004)0430	16/06/2004	Summary
Commission response to text adopted in plenary	SP(2005)4139	20/10/2005	

EU-India relationship: a strategic partnership

2004/2169(INI) - 29/09/2005 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament adopted a resolution based on the own-initiative report drafted by Emilio **MENÉNDEZ DE VALLE** (PES, ES) on EU-India relations: A Strategic Partnership. (please see the summary of 13/07/2005.) Parliament warmly welcomed the agreement on a strategic partnership between the EU and India, which confers on relations between the EU and India an importance equal to those with China, Russia, Japan, the USA and Canada. However, the goals outlined in the ground-breaking strategic partnership must be properly funded with new resources in order to be able to fulfil our commitments and aspirations. Any additional resources needed to carry out the goals of the strategic partnership should be not sourced from, but additional to, existing EU projects and programmes in India. In terms of human development indicators, India has made considerable progress and has changed to some extent from being a beneficiary to a donor of development aid. Parliament voiced its concern, however, at the persistently high

number of Indians who still have to live in absolute poverty and are deprived of all rights. It went on to recognise the legitimate aspirations of the USA to establish a strategic alliance with India, but also the need for a multipolar world. There are significant advantages that European know-how and sensibility may offer India.

Economic issues: India and the EU share the view that trade, investment and free competition are key factors in economic development. They also share the view that, if such development is to be harmonious and equitable, account must be taken of fundamental social needs which strengthen economic and social cohesion. Parliament urges the Indian Government to pay heed to these matters as it embarks on the vast task of development. It also urged the Indian private sector, which has benefited from the full confidence of the government and is playing a key role in the economic measures and plans drawn up by the government, to display the utmost social sensitivity when participating in these plans.

With regard to the abolition of quantitative restrictions on textile and clothing imports, Parliament recalled that India is expected to benefit particularly from this measure. It hoped that India would abstain from any unfair trade practices towards the EU industry, so that the EU in turn will not be forced to have recourse to the appropriate trade defence instruments consistent with WTO rules. The EU should consider it important to encourage India in regard to the implementation of international labour standards, in particular through the comprehensive ratification and practical application of the ILO Conventions with particular regard to child labour.

Development: Parliament expressed its serious concern at the spread of AIDS in the country. It called on the Indian Government to declare a firm commitment to tackling this problem as a priority. It understood that the laws on intellectual property rights recently adopted by the Indian Parliament might have adverse effects on the production capacity of the Indian pharmaceutical industry, which has been a source of affordable medicines, particularly for AIDS. Parliament believed that the law should allow derogations for medicines which are of public interest, such as those used to combat AIDS, cancer, malaria, tuberculosis and hepatitis. Half of the patients who take antiviral medicines in poor countries are using medication produced in India. The EU should support India in further implementing its intellectual property laws in a manner that will avoid barriers to the production and export of essential medicines.

Environment and agriculture: The increasing environmental destruction in India is a constantly growing problem, particularly for the poor population, in terms of water pollution, land degradation, air pollution, climate change and loss of biodiversity. Parliament stressed the particular urgency of pressing ahead with EU cooperation with India in this field. It urged India, which has signed the Kyoto Protocol but which enjoys a temporary derogation from certain commitments, to show greater sensitivity to the question of global warming.

Human rights: Parliament recognised that, for centuries, India has preserved a multi-ethnic, multi-religious, multi-cultural and linguistically diverse society within its territory, offering an example to the West and to Europe. It called on the Indian Government to guard particularly against the emergence of tensions among communities, which would jeopardise the country's secular heritage of tolerance and coexistence. It went on to ask for reform of the exceedingly slow and antiquated judicial system, the abolition of the use of the death penalty in its judicial system, the ratification of the United Nations Convention Against Torture, the ratification of the conventions on the abolition of child labour and on the promotion of collective bargaining.

International situation: Parliament recognised that India has played a major role in conflict prevention and peacekeeping, for example in Afghanistan. It called upon India, as the largest member of the SAARC, to take a lead in developing SAARC regional cooperation further. It went on to note the rapprochement between Iran, Pakistan and India, as a result of which consideration is being given to the building of a gas pipeline from Iran to India passing through Pakistani territory. Support should be given to projects of this kind, which are essentially peaceful in nature, benefit the peoples of the region and create a network of mutual interests deterring the prospect of conflict between them, and encourage regional stability. Parliament welcomed the signs of progress in Indo-Pakistani bilateral talks on Kashmir and other mutual displays of flexibility, such as the recently launched bus service between the two, Indian and Pakistani, parts of the territory, and the visits by the Indian Minister of Foreign Affairs to Pakistan and the President of Pakistan to India.

Finally, Parliament urged India, together with Pakistan and Israel, to become parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, which is an irreplaceable multilateral instrument for maintaining and consolidating international peace.

EU-India relationship: a strategic partnership

2004/2169(INI) - 16/06/2004 - Non-legislative basic document

PURPOSE : to present Commission communication on an EU-India Strategic Partnership.

CONTENT : this Commission communication on an EU-India strategic partnership seeks to identify the challenges, opportunities and expectations for international, economic and development policies between the EU and India. The Communication examines a number of policy areas affecting the relationship between the two entities – from security issues to regional questions, the economy and trade.

The Report notes that the existing relationship is based on one of mutual respect and the sharing of common fundamental values such as the promotion of democracy, human rights and the rule of law. The authors of the Report also comment on the fact that both the EU and India are committed to an effective multilateral approach to the solving of international problems. Other areas in which the EU and India share common ground are conflict prevention, the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, the fight against terrorism and organised crime, migration and promoting peace and prosperity in South Asia.

On the matter of strengthening the economic partnership between the two blocks the Report notes that the EU is India's largest exporter and main source of foreign direct investment. This compares with India being only the EU's fourteenth partner – behind countries such as China, Brazil and South Africa. The Report concludes that trade and investment volumes are below potential and could be boosted. Future actions could, for example, include greater market opening and economic reform on India's behalf. Wider societal needs will have to be taken into account when discussing trade and investment issues, such as the environment and consumer protection.

As far as boosting trade and investment is concerned the Report comments on the fact that both the EU and India are key players in the WTO with both sides standing to benefit from the successful conclusion of the Doha Development Agenda. The EU should seek to achieve greater convergence with India on key issues such as the rules area, the Singapore Issues, GATS, agriculture, non-agricultural market access, geographical indications and special and differential treatment. On the bilateral level the Commission proposes closer dialogue not only on investment issues but also on issues relating to intellectual property rights.

Concerning development issues the Report states that since the 1970's much as been done in India to improve the well being of its people. Poverty remain widespread, unemployment and under-employment is high and vast disparities persist in per capita income. At the same time, however, India is becoming an atypical actor in development policy and has reduced soft loans and grants by accepting only six bilateral donors – the US, Russia, Japan, the UK, Germany and the EU. The Commission suggests the EU should bolster development policies by encouraging India to meet the Millennium Development Goals whilst on a more grass roots level helping marginalised groups to participate fully in society.

Based on the Report's findings, the Commission invites the Council and the European Parliament to endorse the main findings of the Communication. The Report should act as a starting point for reflection on the up-grading of EU-India relations to be debated at the fifth EU-India Summit. Further debate between both the EU and India could lead to an Action Plan and a new joint EU-India Political Declaration.