Basic information

2005/2580(RSP) RSP - Resolutions on topical subjects	Procedure completed
Resolution on a Joint Statement by the Council and the representatives of the Governments of the Member States meeting within the Council, the European Parliament and the Commission on European Union Development Policy: 'The European Consensus on Development' **Subject** 6.30 Development cooperation	

Key players

Council of the European Union

Council configuration	Meetings	Date
General Affairs	2690	2005-11-21
General Affairs	2700	2005-12-12

Key events

Date	Event	Reference	Summary
21/11/2005	Debate in Council		Summary
12/12/2005	Resolution/conclusions adopted by Council		Summary
14/12/2005	Debate in Parliament		
15/12/2005	Decision by Parliament	T6-0528/2005	Summary
15/12/2005	Results of vote in Parliament		
15/12/2005	End of procedure in Parliament		

Technical information

Procedure reference	2005/2580(RSP)
Procedure type	RSP - Resolutions on topical subjects
Procedure subtype	Resolution on statement
Legal basis	Rules of Procedure EP 136-p2
Stage reached in procedure	Procedure completed

Documentation gateway

European Parliament

Document type	Committee	Reference	Date	Summary

Motion for a resolution		B6-0653/2005	14/12/2005	
Text adopted by Parliament, topical subjects		T6-0528/2005	15/12/2005	Summary

Resolution on a Joint Statement by the Council and the representatives of the Governments of the Member States meeting within the Council, the European Parliament and the Commission on European Union Development Policy: 'The European Consensus on Development'

2005/2580(RSP) - 21/11/2005

The Council welcomes the Commission’s Annual Report on the EC's development policy and the implementation of external assistance in 2004. In particular, it welcomes the provision by the Commission of a short Executive Summary aimed at meeting the needs of a broader audience and invites the Commission to focus the analysis in forthcoming Summaries on the evidence of results and impact of its assistance, including key financial information. The Council notes the overall increase in the disbursement rate of over 10%, including the 5% increase in disbursements to ACP countries, to the highest level on record but is concerned that despite an increase in 2004 of 10% in the amounts flowing to low income and least-developed countries, their proportion of Community development assistance, after rising from 32% in 2000 to 44% in 2003, has fallen back in 2004 by 0.8%. It recalls that in November 2004 it underlined the need to find ways to increase focus on the poorest, with a specific focus in Africa. As a consequence, it asks the Commission to present in next year's report a more detailed breakdown of payments, including both total amounts and percentage shares, to the different income groups of beneficiary countries, taking into account the relatively large proportion of total payments (including activities such as regional co-operation) which are currently reported as unallocable, but which nevertheless substantially benefit the least developed and other low-income countries; and also to report on measures to ensure a greater impact on poverty and inequality in middle income countries.

The Council welcomes in this context the 60% increase in 2004 in disbursements in the MEDA programme and invites the Commission to increase the emphasis of its programmes in the ENP regions on strengthening poverty-reducing growth and economic transition, encouraging democracy, good governance, the rule of law and human rights, and in the MEDA region in particular improving standards of education, especially for women and girls.

It encourages the Commission to continue to increase the impact of its programmes in the current TACIS region particularly on economic transition, human rights and on reinforcing the health sector.

The Commission is also requested to focus its evaluation efforts on analysing the reliability of such current indications in predicting the impact and sustainability of the interventions after project completion.

The Council welcomes the Commission’s emphasis on the partner countries’ ownership of the harmonisation agenda including cooperation with other donors, and its continuing efforts to help to improve the effectiveness of its assistance through increased coherence, complementarity, donor coordination, harmonisation and alignment in support of partner country owned harmonisation initiatives. In this connection the Council recalls that the Member States and the Commission can, when at the country level deemed feasible and appropriate, formulate a flexible roadmap as an instrument to indicate the steps the Member States and the Commission will take to contribute to the realisation of the country based action plan. It equally invites the Commission, in next year’s Annual Report, to report on progress in implementing the commitments made in the context of the 2005 Paris High Level Forum on aid effectiveness, including in the neighbourhood countries. It further invites the Commission to present a thorough analysis of the framework of specific cooperation with multilateral agencies including the United Nations and the World Bank.

As regards the reforms, the Council notes that the process of devolving management responsibility to Delegations was largely completed in 2004 and recalls the assessment made recently by the Court of Auditors of its impact. The Commission is asked, in its next report, to show how it has addressed the relevant concerns and recommendations, notably on adequate professional staffing.

The Council encourages the Commission to continue the progress made on mainstreaming gender considerations and to take necessary steps for mainstreaming of other issues such as democracy, good governance and the rule of law, human rights, the rights of the child and environmental sustainability.

Lastly, the Council requests the Commission to present the 2006 Annual Report sooner after the reporting period, and not later than June each year, to maximise the relevance of the information at the time the Report is published, and to allow a better reflection of lessons learned in the forthcoming planning period.

Resolution on a Joint Statement by the Council and the representatives of the Governments of the Member States meeting within the Council, the European Parliament and the Commission on European Union Development Policy: 'The European Consensus on Development'

2005/2580(RSP) - 15/12/2005 - Text adopted by Parliament, topical subjects

The European Parliament adopted a resolution giving its assent to the Joint Statement by the Council and the representatives of the Governments of the Member States meeting within the Council, the European Parliament and the Commission on **European Union Development Policy: 'The European Consensus on Development".**Itwelcomed the initiative by the Commission to revise and update the 2000 Development Policy Statement and in particular to involve Parliament in this process. It also welcomed the Commission's resolve to ensure that all its services and delegations managing the programming of Community development assistance use the "European Consensus on Development" as the key reference for the Community's objectives for implementation of all development cooperation.

For the first time the EU and its Member States have agreed to act together to promote a common EU vision of development. Parliament was particularly satisfied with the resolve expressed by the signatories of the "European Consensus on Development":

-to stress that poverty eradication and the achievement of the MDGs are the overarching objectives of EU development policy,

-to ensure policy coherence for development and to harmonise procedures between the Community, the Member States and other donors,

-to define more clearly the specific role of the Commission, and

-to stimulate debate and dialogue with local economic and social partners on development policy and the implementation of the MDGs.

Parliament did, however, regret that only scant reference is made to children's rights, which should be mainstreamed into all development activities. It also regretted that Parliament's strong emphasis in the negotiations on human development, in particular both health and education, had not been fully taken on board in the Statement.

Parliament expressed its satisfaction that a truly inclusive and transparent negotiating process between Parliament, the Council and the Commission has made it possible to obtain a "European Consensus on Development". Many of Parliament's suggestions have been incorporated into the document. The Council and the Commission are asked to regard this process as a model for future negotiations on crucial policy matters.

Resolution on a Joint Statement by the Council and the representatives of the Governments of the Member States meeting within the Council, the European Parliament and the Commission on European Union Development Policy: 'The European Consensus on Development'

2005/2580(RSP) - 12/12/2005

The Council adopted a series of conclusions on aid for trade in the framework of development cooperation. It states that while further liberalisation of world trade through a new WTO agreement will be beneficial for developing countries in general, many of the poorest of these may face adjustment difficulties in the short term, and will need help to take advantage of the opportunities it creates. As their capacity to produce goods competitively for the international market is weak, the international community needs to provide additional support, so that poorer developing countries feel the Doha Round is genuinely in their interests.

The following measures have been set out by the Council :

1) Enhanced Integrated Framework : the Integrated Framework for Trade Related Technical Assistance for LDCs (IF) is an important mechanism for helping poor countries use trade-related assistance and infrastructure investment effectively, to stimulate broad based economic growth through trade. However, it needs to find ways to improve its governance, local ownership, alignment with national poverty reduction plans and effective monitoring of results, as well as an expansion if its resources and scope, to make it more effective. On the understanding that the enhancement of the IF needs to address fully its existing weaknesses, the EU resolves that, within available budgets and with other donors, it will provide resources to enable the enhanced IF to be adequately and predictably funded. Some Member States may alternatively decide to provide aid for the same purpose through other channels;

2) Trade-Related Assistance : trade related technical assistance and capacity building as reported by the DAC and WTO covers two broad categories:

- Trade policy and regulation covers support for effective participation in trade negotiations, analysis and implementation of trade agreements, trade policy mainstreaming and standards, trade facilitation and customs regimes, support to regional trade arrangements and human resources development in trade;

- Trade development covers business development and activities aimed at improving the business climate, access to trade finance, and trade promotion in productive sectors (agriculture, forestry, fishing, industry, mining, tourism, services), including at the institutional and enterprise level.

Within their commitments to future increases in development assistance, Member States will strive to increase the EU's collective spending on trade-related assistance (as so defined), in response to needs prioritised in partner country poverty reduction strategies or development plans, with a view to reaching a figure of EUR 1 billion per year by 2010, inclusive of spending on the enhanced Integrated Framework. This would bring the contribution of the EU as a whole, including the Community contribution, to EUR 2 billion per year by 2010.

3) Infrastructure : the European Commission's proposal to increase EU (Community and Member States') aid to infrastructure (including energy and water) through a new Europe-Africa Partnership on Infrastructure, linked to the decision of Member States to increase ODA by EUR 20 billion per year by 2010. The World Bank's plans to increase infrastructure lending by $1billion per year to around $10 billion by 2008. Moreover, the Gleneagles agreement by the G8 aims to boost growth, attract new investment and contribute to Africa's capacity to trade" through the establishment of the Infrastructure Consortium for Africa, jointly supported by African countries and by the European Commission, G8, and key multilaterals. The EU confirms the importance of aid to help improve developing countries' infrastructure, in particular because infrastructure is complementary to trade-related assistance in stimulating exported growth, and will work towards more effective and increased infrastructure activity, particularly in Africa. Aid for infrastructure should therefore be assessed on qualitative aspects with a view to maximizing its benefit in terms of poverty reduction and environmental protection.

4) Adjustment :some developing countries are likely to be faced with adjustment difficulties, notably for the following reasons:

- erosion in trade preferences;

- reduction in government revenue resulting from lower tariffs;

- increased cost of food imports resulting from reductions in export subsidies, for net food

importers.

The importance of providing additional support for trade adjustment and integration was recognised in the Millennium Review Summit outcome. Adjustment issues, related to trade reform, should be part of an overall package of domestic policy reforms and economic planning and financial support. However, developing countries need to be assured of credible assistance and mechanisms to facilitate adjustment.

The EU recognises the need for adequate provision for trade adjustment, notably for countries facing erosion in trade preferences. The IMF and the World Bank should provide transparent monitoring of the impact of erosion in preferences and trade liberalisation on a country by country basis, to allow additional resources to be made available in response, including through the IMF's "trade integration mechanism" and the WB's programmes.