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21. Welcomes the intensified EU-Russia dialogue on energy issues; underlines the importance of energy imports for European economies, representing as they do a potential opportunity for further trade and economic cooperation between the EU and Russia; stresses that the principles of interdependence and transparency should be the basis of such cooperation, together with equal access to markets, infrastructure and investment; calls on the Council and the Commission to ensure that the principles of the Energy Charter Treaty, the Transit Protocol annexed thereto and the G8 conclusions are included in a new Partnership and Cooperation Agreement between the EU and Russia, including further cooperation on energy efficiency, energy saving and renewable energy; points out that these principles should be applied to major energy infrastructure projects, such as the Baltic gas pipeline; calls for the European Union to speak to Russia with one voice on these sensitive energy matters;

22. Advocates the exchange of information on advanced energy technologies and encourages contacts between EU and Russian energy sector actors, as well the efforts necessary to improve energy efficiency and to develop non-CO₂-emitting technologies, which present significant opportunities for cooperation, particularly industrial cooperation, with the exchange of best practices and technologies between Russian and EU companies;

23. Calls upon Russia and the EU Member States to reach the prescribed targets of the Kyoto Protocol and insists, in this respect, on the specific responsibility of developed countries to take the lead in reducing emissions; calls on Russia to play an active role in future international negotiations and to facilitate a swift agreement by 2008, and by 2009 at the latest, to ensure continuity of the global carbon market;

24. Welcomes the initiatives to achieve visa-free travel between the European Union and Russia, holding out the prospect of improved relations; calls for further cooperation on illegal immigration, improved checks on identity documents and better information exchange on terrorism and organised crime; emphasises that the Council and the Commission must ensure that Russia complies with all the conditions set in any negotiated agreement on the elimination of visas between the two sides, so as to prevent any breach of security and democracy in Europe;

25. Calls on the Council and the Commission to redouble their efforts to solve the problems involved in crossing the EU-Russian border and to engage in concrete projects and fully utilise the new Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument and Interreg funds for cross-border cooperation;

26. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission, the Governments and Parliaments of the Member States and of the Russian Federation and the Council of Europe.

P6_TA(2007)0179

EU strategy for reform in the Arab world

European Parliament resolution of 10 May 2007 on reforms in the Arab world: what strategy should the European Union adopt? (2006/2172(INI))

The European Parliament,

- having regard to the policies and strategies adopted by the Commission and the Council in relation to the various countries of the Arab world,
- having regard to the interim report on the European Union's Strategic Partnership with the Mediterranean and the Middle East, adopted by the European Council in December 2006,

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- having regard to the European strategy for the Arab world presented in 2003 by the EU's High Representative,
 - having regard to the Commission's communication to the Council and the European Parliament entitled 'Wider Europe — Neighbourhood: A New Framework for Relations with our Eastern and Southern Neighbours' (COM(2003)0104); its Strategy Paper on the European Neighbourhood Policy (COM(2004)0373); its proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council laying down general provisions establishing a European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument (COM(2004)0628); its communication to the Council on the Commission proposals for action plans under the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) (COM(2004)0795) and the action plans for the countries concerned; and its communication on strengthening the European Neighbourhood Policy (COM(2006)0726),
 - having regard to the political priorities of the European presidency of the Euro-Mediterranean Parliamentary Assembly (EMPA), formulated on 21 April 2005, which focus on intensifying the dialogue on human rights with the parliaments of the partner countries,
 - having regard to the EMPA resolutions adopted at its meetings of 21 November 2005 in Rabat and 27 March 2006 in Brussels,
 - having regard to the reports on human development in the Arab world published in 2002, 2003 and 2005 by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), and especially the 2004 report entitled 'Towards freedom in the Arab world',
 - having regard to its previous resolutions on the European Union's Mediterranean policy, in particular its resolution of 12 February 2004 on reinvigorating EU actions on human rights and democratisation with Mediterranean partners⁽¹⁾, the Five Year Work Programme adopted at the Barcelona Euro-Med Summit on 28 November 2005 and its resolution of 27 October 2005 on the Barcelona process revisited⁽²⁾,
 - having regard to the United Nations Charter and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights,
 - having regard to Rule 45 of its Rules of Procedure,
 - having regard to the report of the Committee on Foreign Affairs (A6-0127/2007),
- A. whereas the notion of Arab identity, understood as a unifying factor, is perceived and claimed as a shared characteristic by the peoples and states of a vast geographical area stretching from the Maghreb, via the Mashreq and the Middle East, to the Persian Gulf,
- B. whereas this Arab identity, while it manifests itself in varying forms in different real-life situations, be they political (in monarchies, Arab republics, or within the State of Israel and the Palestinian Authority), religious (among Sunni — including Wahhabi —, Alawite, Druze and Shiite Muslims, and Christians of various denominations) or social (in large cities, rural or mountainous areas, and among nomadic peoples), nevertheless displays a number of common, trans-national parameters,
- C. whereas the European view of the Arab world is generally confined to an approach based on relations at bilateral or sub-regional level between states, and whereas the EU's overall strategy towards the Arab world should be revitalised not only by using existing regional organisations (the League of Arab States, the Gulf Cooperation Council and the Arab Maghreb Union, if it is revived), and existing tools and structures (Euromed, Meda Programme, association agreements, European Neighbourhood Policy), but also by strengthening support for non-state actors in the region,

⁽¹⁾ OJ C 97 E, 22.4.2004, p. 656.

⁽²⁾ OJ C 272 E, 9.11.2006, p. 570.

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- D. whereas the strategy for the Arab world presented in 2003 by the High Representative of the EU was very largely the result of the risks and threats which emerged following the terrorist attacks of 11 September 2001,
- E. whereas a better and deeper understanding in Europe of the multi-faceted society and cultural diversities in the Arab world is currently necessary so as to bridge the gap between the two shores of the Mediterranean, improve integration policies in the EU Member States and overcome stereotypes and prejudices,
- F. whereas the upheavals caused by the end of the cold war and of the bipolar world order not only encouraged aspirations towards emancipation within Arab societies but also spurred on some Arab governments and economic and social forces to take an active part in globalisation and in the multi-polar order,
- G. whereas civil society and other stakeholders, long muzzled in the Arab world, are making their presence increasingly felt and are demanding more attention, greater responsibilities and a growing political role,
- H. whereas earlier experiments with an 'Arab renaissance', understood as attempts at reform, generally ended in failure, and whereas state nationalism has been a considerable hindrance to any project seeking to create Arab unity,
- I. whereas the Final Declaration adopted by the Summit of the Arab League Council held in Tunis on 23 and 24 May 2004 reiterates *inter alia* a commitment to reform and modernise its Member States through democratic consolidation and political participation,
- J. whereas it is in the common interest of the Arab countries and their European partners that political, economic and social reforms should be initiated with a view to revitalising cooperation, stability and democratisation, and to raising living standards and reducing social disparities, in the region as a whole,
- K. whereas advances in political and economic liberalisation and progress on human rights and in the social and educational fields are the only way to contribute to greater stability in those countries, and whereas, by contrast, resistance to change is not a guarantee of real stability,
- L. whereas the contributions made over the past few years by the United Nations, and in particular by the High-level Group of the Alliance of Civilisations and by the UN Development Programme, deriving from a close involvement with the different strands of Arab society, need to be translated into real concrete policies,
- M. whereas Europe's relations with the authorities of the countries concerned have for too long been based exclusively on the pursuit of stability and strategic partnership, without taking into account respect by the authorities for universal human rights, thus undermining efforts by civil society actors to reform the various societies from within,
- N. whereas it is important to create a framework within which the dialogue between all the various components of the Arab societies can take place freely and openly, in such a way as to bring about, from inside, a genuine reform process,
- O. whereas the Arab Charter on Human Rights, adopted in 1994, is an expression of the aspiration to guarantee respect for human rights in the Arab world; regretting, however, that some of its provisions are worded in such a way as to allow differing interpretations,
- P. whereas the Arab movement, as conceived by its founding fathers, is a project which has included the secularisation of societies among its objectives; whereas the current paths of political Islam do not always appear to be providing appropriate answers to the problems of political reform; concerned that the deadlocks in political reform are fuelling radical Islamism and its rhetoric of hatred towards Jews; and whereas the moderation of Islamism depends on both the stability of the institutional framework in which they evolve and the opportunities which the latter offers to influence policy-making;

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1. Is convinced that Arab identity is by no means incompatible with the notion of modernity or with the initiation of serious reforms; considers that the feeling of impotence which underlies the 'Arab malaise' can be overcome through a renewed partnership based on understanding, mutual confidence, respect for social and cultural practices and credibility; recalls that the westernisation of Arab societies is not the most appropriate route to this end and that the notions of democracy, human rights and the rule of law are fundamental and universal values which innumerable Muslim authorities and governments have declared to be compatible with Islam;
2. Welcomes the abovementioned Commission communication on strengthening the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP); regards the ENP as a crucial tool in promoting reform in the EU's southern and eastern neighbours; expresses disappointment at the proposed amount of the Governance Facility, which it believes should be increased in size in order to ensure effectiveness;
3. Considers, in view of the inherent limitations of the bilateral, ad hoc strategies pursued by the EU towards its partner countries over the last few decades, that a fresh boost should be given — in the context of the rationalisation of the EU's external actions — to the partnership between the EU and its Member States on the one hand and the Arab world as a whole on the other, while targeting very specific cooperation sectors and acting in tandem with existing political structures such as the League of Arab States and the Gulf Cooperation Council, and even with the Arab Maghreb Union, if it is revived; emphasises that engagement with civil society organisations and reform movements at the regional level should be part of this effort, as well as specific cooperation, in particular with those political organisations which promote democracy by non-violent means;
4. Stresses that the weakness of the reform process in the Arab world is also due to the difficulties and the controversies between some of the Arab countries; takes the view that the EU should make every effort to facilitate the political and economic integration of the Arab countries; notes that, in order to be really influential, the EU should not demonstrate any feeling of superiority or the impression of giving lessons, but should rather make the Euro-Arab dialogue a true dialogue between equals;
5. Considers that, while it is extremely important that the Euro-Arab relationship include consideration of the vital need to combat terrorism, it is vital for the effectiveness and substance of that relationship that the fight against terrorism does not overshadow or hold back a host of other topics of common interest, such as economic and social development, employment, sustainable development, proper public administration, the fight against corruption, the development and consolidation of a strong and genuine civil society as the promoter of advances in terms of the democratic system and of tolerance, the fight for gender equality, full respect for, and non-discrimination in respect of, different sexual orientations, conservation of the global cultural heritage, inter-cultural dialogue, good governance, free and fair media, political participation and the promotion of human rights and fundamental freedoms, freedom of conscience and religious freedom, freedom of expression and association, the rejection of torture and the abolition of the death penalty, and the rejection of intolerance and fundamentalism, with a view to creating a genuine area of shared peace and prosperity;
6. Calls on Arab countries to combat impunity wherever it occurs and to set up mechanisms of transitional justice in order to ensure that the victims of serious human rights violations receive justice and that the people responsible for those crimes are held to account; calls, in the same spirit, on Arab countries to ratify the Rome Statute establishing the International Criminal Court and to sign the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance;
7. Welcomes the existence of forums for dialogue between the European Union and the Arab world and the numerous cooperation projects and initiatives set up via the Barcelona Process, the Strategic Partnership for the Mediterranean and the Middle East and cooperation with the Cooperation Council of the Arab States of the Gulf;
8. Emphasises the role played by the EMPA as a democratic body bringing together parliamentarians on both shores of the Mediterranean in the three pillars of the Barcelona Process; calls for a strengthening of cooperation between the EMPA, the Commission and the Council of the European Union; reaffirms that, as the parliamentary institution of the Barcelona Process, the EMPA is available and willing to help in finding a resolution to the Israeli-Arab conflict;

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9. Considers it necessary subsequently to promote the third pillar of the Barcelona Process, namely human and social cooperation, in order to overcome the stereotypes and misunderstandings which prevent a frank and deep rapprochement between the peoples on both shores of the Mediterranean; calls on the actors in the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership, and particularly on the governments, to support the work of the Anna Lindh Euro-Mediterranean Foundation for the Dialogue between Cultures by giving it the substantial resources it needs to consolidate its network of networks bringing together more than 1 200 bodies and associations working to achieve dialogue in their societies;
10. Calls on the EU and its Member States, as well the entire international community, to develop balanced relations with the countries in the region; points out that unilaterally supporting and condemning certain states more than others can result in polarisation and risks further complicating the already very complicated situation in the Arab world;
11. Believes that efforts to open fresh negotiations with the Arab world should not include persons, organisations and states which condone terrorist activities and deny the State of Israel's legal right to exist;
12. Notes that any deepening of Euro-Arab relations will depend on the energy and talent which Europe brings to bear in reconciling its historic duties and responsibilities towards the State of Israel and the Jewish people with its responsibilities to play a more active and effective role by guaranteeing greater respect for international and humanitarian law, so as to achieve a lasting settlement of the conflict, in particular by creating a democratic Palestinian state existing side by side, in peace and security, with the State of Israel;
13. Welcomes, in this respect, the Saudi peace initiative unanimously approved on 28 March 2007 at the League of Arab States summit in Riyadh; takes the view that this constitutes an important contribution by the Arab world to the attempts to restart the peace process and to reach a comprehensive settlement of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict; calls on the Council to make every effort to deal with this proposal at the next meeting of the Quartet and to find ways of associating the League of Arab States more closely within this framework;
14. Understands that one of the inherent weaknesses in the Euro-Arab dialogue derives from the lack of legitimacy which sometimes characterises the Arab political interlocutors within their own countries, particularly as a result of their poor democratic, economic and social performance;
15. Calls, therefore, for Europe also to give visible political support to the actors in civil society, in associations and in religious life, and in particular to those political organisations which promote democracy by non-violent means, excluding sectarian, fundamentalist and extremist nationalist forces but including, where appropriate, secular actors and moderate Islamists — in particular secular Islamists —, whom Europe has encouraged to participate in the democratic process, thus striking a balance between culture-based perceptions and political pragmatism; believes that the success of such support critically depends on a thorough understanding of political and social structures and developments and the ability to act in accordance with local political dynamics; considers that inter-cultural dialogue can only be revived through the affirmation of a common and universal basis of human values which transcends dogmas and community allegiances, in accordance with the proposals on the dialogue of civilisations and with all UN initiatives on this subject;
16. Resolutely endorses, therefore, the need for the European Union to engage in a wide-ranging cultural dialogue to encourage its Arab interlocutors to embrace the Union's fundamental values (the rule of law, human rights, democracy, etc) while taking differing cultural and political perceptions into account;
17. Notes the limited progress made in liberalising inter-Arab trade and in strengthening the private sector; calls on the Commission and the Council to redouble their efforts to encourage the sustainable and equitable economic development of the Arab countries, seeking to reduce inequalities through structural and social policies which limit the harmful social effects of economic reforms; supports the economic integration of the Arab countries, particularly in essential markets such as energy and telecommunications, with a view to generating a dynamic development process which will favour other sectors, and at the same time putting in place policies aimed at encouraging reform, subject to precise and limited technical and political conditions; welcomes the efforts made to create a Euro-Mediterranean Free Trade Area and welcomes the Agadir Agreement, which promotes intra-regional trade; awaits the conclusion of the EU-Gulf Cooperation Council Free Trade Agreement;

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18. Notes that, with regard to political reforms and the progress of democracy, the situations in the Arab world are very diverse and that it is therefore not appropriate to establish uniform models;

19. Hopes that those Arab countries which have not yet done so will commit themselves more fully to religious freedom, or to the right of individuals and communities to freely profess their beliefs and practise their faith, also guaranteeing the independence and separation of institutions and of political power from the religious authorities; on this point, considers that the testimony of millions of Muslims living in Europe should help the Arab countries to implement on the domestic scene the consistent principle of reciprocity which underlies international relations;

20. Stresses that supporting the development of civil society and respect for fundamental rights, particularly those relating to freedom of expression and religion, must not be confused with the choice of regime or with the procedures for choosing leaders; stresses the need to monitor developments in the region whilst respecting the will of the people and taking into account cultural, historical and political differences; notes that the will of the people, in its various forms, may differ from what is accepted in Europe, and that any attempt to align it with European models by force may accordingly prove counter-productive; stresses that, in order for change to be legitimate, it must be adopted and supported by the peoples concerned;

21. Hopes in particular for greater awareness of the role of women and female emancipation in civil and political society;

22. Urges the League of Arab States to revise and clarify certain of the provisions of the Arab Charter on Human Rights and to develop mechanisms making it possible to monitor compliance with the Charter's provisions in the signatory states;

23. Points out that strengthening democracy and the rule of law and respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms are among the European Union's foreign policy objectives and that it is therefore fair and consistent to wish to pursue an ambitious human rights policy based on compliance with the human rights and democracy clause in the agreements and on a structured and in-depth political dialogue in this area; points out at the same time that the Arab countries have ratified the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, thereby undertaking to ensure respect for these rights in their respective countries;

24. Calls on the Commission to give more encouragement in the Arab world to respect for the principle of the rule of law and the legal reform movement; considers that this should be done with due regard for the values deriving from the universal system of human rights, and that it should involve a political reform which seeks to legalise the action of opposition movements on the basis of the existing institutions — without undermining the validity of those institutions — in line with the action plans under the European Neighbourhood Policy and the decisions taken in the context of the Barcelona Process; encourages the Commission to make full use of the possibilities offered by the European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights (EIDHR) to support civil society and political reform movements in the region;

25. Calls on the Commission, therefore, to give appropriate support to all those engaged in the reform movement in the Arab world, to involve state actors and civil society actors, and to give its support to the creation of common Arab institutions, particularly parliamentary institutions; also calls on the Commission to devise a regular formal mechanism for consultation and monitoring, with the League of Arab States, at the highest level and, on a subsidiarity basis, in all areas of common interest; calls for the European Union and the League of Arab States to hold regular summits with a view to developing common agendas and areas of work;

26. Notes the importance and encourages the role of new media in the dissemination of democratic values in the Arab world and in the creation of a pan-Arab public sphere characterised by debate and the meeting of ideas; emphasises in this regard the need to start broadcasting Euronews programmes in Arabic and Farsi;

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27. Calls on the Commission, the Council and the Member States to encourage exchanges of students, teachers, academics and researchers between the EU and Arab countries and to facilitate those exchanges through an adapted and more flexible visa regime;
28. Encourages the Member States to set up research centres on their territory for the purposes of cultural exchange and comparative studies between Arab and European countries, so as to provide facilities for detailed interdisciplinary studies and create bridges to foster mutual understanding;
29. Calls on the Commission to encourage, using all available means, university and scientific research in the Arab world and to promote the implementation of an ambitious publishing policy with a view to developing the publication and translation of scientific and literary works at prices that are accessible to everyone;
30. Calls on the Commission to support initiatives aimed at combating corruption in the Arab world, in particular by introducing clear rules on the appointment of civil servants;
31. Considers that, as in the recent case of the Paris III Conference for Lebanon, the European Union's financial aid could be the most effective and reliable means of ensuring the visible presence of the Union and its Member States through the provision of strategic and conditional support for reforms in the Arab world, with due respect to existing agreements and the local political situation at state or regional level;
32. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council and the Commission, the League of Arab States, the Gulf Cooperation Council and the governments and parliaments of the Member States, of the Arab countries and of Israel.
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P6_TA(2007)0180

EU partnership in the Horn of Africa

European Parliament resolution of 10 May 2007 on the Horn of Africa: EU Regional political partnership for peace, security and development (2006/2291(INI))

The European Parliament,

- having regard to the EU strategy 'The EU and Africa: Towards a Strategic Partnership' (The European Strategy for Africa), adopted by the European Council of 15-16 December 2005,
- having regard 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' (The European Consensus on Development) signed on 20 December 2005 ⁽¹⁾,
- having regard to the Partnership Agreement between the members of the African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) Group of States, of the one part, and the Community and its Member States, of the other part, signed in Cotonou on 23 June 2000 ⁽²⁾, as amended by the Agreement amending the Partnership Agreement, signed in Luxembourg on 25 June 2005 ⁽³⁾ (the Cotonou Agreement), in particular Article 8 thereof,
- having regard to the EU Strategy to combat the illicit accumulation of and trafficking of SALW (small arms and light weapons) and their ammunition, adopted by the European Council of 15-16 December 2005,

⁽¹⁾ OJ C 46, 24.2.2006, p. 1.

⁽²⁾ OJ L 317, 15.12.2000, p. 3.

⁽³⁾ OJ L 209, 11.8.2005, p. 27.