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7. Coherence of different Union policies with development policy

B5-0117, 0120, 0121, 0122 and 0123/2000

European Parliament resolution on the coherence of the various policies with development policy

The European Parliament,

- having regard to the Treaty on European Union,
 - having regard to the Council Resolution on 5 June 1997 on 'coherence of the EC's Development Cooperation with its other policies' which focussed on the areas of peace building, conflict prevention and resolution, food security, fisheries and migration,
 - having regard to Article 12 of the Lomé Convention on coherence of Community policies and their impact on the implementation of the ACP-EC Agreement,
 - having regard to the Council's Declaration on Development Policy for the Year 2000 of 18 November 1992, recognising the linkage between development cooperation and other Community policies as well as the need to take into account their impact on developing countries,
 - having regard to the Council's request to the Commission that it submit annual reports on the progress made in this field, as well as proposals for future activities, and to its wish to be able to consider the first such report during the second half of 1998,
- A. recalling that the Treaty on European Union establishes that the Council and the Commission shall be responsible for ensuring the consistency of the Union's external activities as a whole in the context of external relations, security, trade, economic and development policies and shall ensure the implementation of these policies, each in accordance with its respective powers,
- B. whereas the chapter on Development Cooperation (Title XX, Article 178) of the Treaty establishing the European Community provides that the Community shall take account of the objectives referred to in Article 177 in the policies that it implements which are likely to affect developing countries,
- C. recalling that Article 177 indicates the objectives of the European Community development programme as follows: sustainable economic and social development, the campaign against poverty and the integration of developing countries into the world economy,
- D. whereas the Council resolution of June 1997 implicitly acknowledges that there is a lack of coherence of some of the EU's policies in relation to its development cooperation policy,
- E. whereas this lack of coherence has been observed in several areas to hamper the effectiveness of the EU's development policy and, by implication, the development of recipient countries,
- F. recalling that the Council requested the Commission to provide annual reports on progress made in this area and proposals for further action, the first of which the Council would discuss in the second half of 1998,
- G. noting that the Commission has not provided any report on the implementation of the aforementioned resolution, despite repeated requests in the Council,
- H. whereas the Council resolution identified four specific areas where policy coherence is particularly important (peace-building, conflict prevention and resolution; food security; fisheries; migration) but whereas several delegations also noted the importance of ensuring policy coherence in other areas such as agriculture, trade and the environment,

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- I. whereas no significant progress can be achieved in terms of sustainable development unless the EU and other major producers open their markets to developing countries' products, end subsidies which are harmful to the agriculture exports of the development countries; stressing the need to promote local production,
- J. deploring the lack of a coherent approach by the Commission in its human rights policy, which adopts different standards both in terms of promotion and sanctions, depending on geographical areas of intervention,
- K. whereas protection of the environment cannot be marginalised to specific programmes only, but should be a structural component of the whole developing policy,
- L. whereas conflict prevention and in particular arms trade restrictions with third countries should be an essential element of the EU strategy towards developing countries,
- M. concerned that the failure to implement policies that have been agreed will decrease the legitimacy of the European institutions in the public's perception,
- N. noting with concern that the Community's interpretation of WTO rules, and notably Article XXIV of GATT concerning the establishment of Free Trade Areas, is very strict and not tuned to the need to allow the necessary flexibility in trade negotiations involving developing countries,
- O. noting that the Community's Common Customs Tariff (CCT) favours the import of raw materials as opposed to processed goods and tariff peaks largely concern products of prime export interest to developing countries such as textiles, clothing and food products, thereby working against the EU development objective to promote sustainable local production and the strengthening of the local economy in developing countries,
- P. noting that the planned review of the Trade-Related Intellectual Property Rights provision on life patents could have negative effects on the access to seeds by farmers in developing countries;
- Q. worried by the manoeuvring by certain transnational European firms in flagrant breach of the Union's development objectives, especially when they export products such as medicines, foodstuffs and pesticides sales of which are banned in the Union,
- R. regretting that the trade section of the Directorate-General for Development has been transferred to the Directorate-General for Trade,
- S. noting further that the external EU fisheries policy may result in negative impacts on fish stocks and upon the local fishing industry,
- T. considering the manifest imbalance between the Union's stated development objectives and the orientation of its budget, in particular the cuts made in the 2000 budget in development cooperation spending,
 1. Requests the Council and the Commission to ensure that export and investment credits are more consistent with the EU's development policy objectives,
 2. Urges the Commission to publish without further delay an annual report on policy coherence in connection with development cooperation;
 3. Calls upon the Commission to treat as a matter of urgency the need to prioritise policy coherence and develop proactive and preventive mechanisms for achieving this;

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4. Calls on the Council to take urgent action wherever required to remedy any observed lack of coherence and thus ensure the effective use of the EU's resources as well as the advancement of its stated development cooperation objectives;
 5. Calls on the Council to formulate common strategies and consistent standards in terms of poverty eradication, human development, environment, human rights and good governance in order to improve the development policies of the 15 Member States;
 6. Calls on the Commission to reorganise its services and the distribution of its portfolios, in order to coordinate better the various aid policies and to ensure ambitious and uniform aid policies in all geographical areas;
 7. Asks for the establishment of an inter-service working group on coherence, comprising the Directorates-General of the Commission whose policies are likely to impact on European Union development policy including the Directorates on agriculture, fisheries, research, trade, external relations and development;
 8. Calls on the Commission to consider the introduction of coherence-watch in particular as regards development cooperation, to prevent unintended incoherence of policies from arising in this area, including the setting up of a complaints procedure open to governments and civil society organisations;
 9. Calls on the Council and the Commission to undertake proper measures in order to gradually make the CAP and the fisheries policy more compatible with the aims of the EU development policies;
 10. Also urges that in the forthcoming negotiations for a new WTO round, these same principles of policy coherence should be discussed and decided upon in order to protect the interests of all developing countries and especially the LDCs;
 11. Believes that partial or total suspension of aid and other sanctions should also be harmonised by adopting a coherent criterion of intervention to be applied in all developing countries, regardless of their geographical location;
 12. Emphasises the importance of a standard environmental clause in agreements with developing countries and the promotion of compliance by all parties to the objective of sustainable development as defined by the Cardiff Process and the relevant UN commitments (Rio, Copenhagen, etc.);
 13. Reiterates the need to apply coherent policies in the area of arms trade, in order to guarantee the control and limitation of arms sales to countries at risk in accordance with the EU code of conduct on arms exports;
 14. Draws attention to the continuing tragedy of anti-personnel landmines and their impact on the implementation of a range of Community and Member State programmes, including development policies, and requests the Commission and the Council to report on the recent measures that they have taken to improve the coherence, coordination and effectiveness of EU mine action;
 15. Calls on the Commission to take into account the policy coherence in all international cooperation negotiations that the EU negotiates with developing countries or groups of developing countries;
 16. Calls upon the Member States to take appropriate action to ensure policy coherence at national and EU levels;
 17. Calls on the Commission and the Member States to strengthen the role of institutions such as Unctad, to use the Tenth Unctad Conference in Bangkok as an opportunity to assess in detail consistency between trade, liberalisation and development policies, in particular as regards the fate of the poorest sections of the world's population;
 18. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission, the governments and the parliaments of the Member States and to Unctad.
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