49. Calls on the EU Member States to investigate the highly problematic impact of credits granted by their export credit agencies on peace, security and development in third countries and asks all Member States to disclose detailed information on credits for arms exports, which, according to some estimates, currently account for about 20 % of total export credits granted and in some Member States even 50 % or more, and asks Member States in particular to commit themselves to refraining from granting credits for arms exports in the future;

50. Instructs its Co-Presidents to forward this resolution to the ACP-EU Council, the European Commission, the parliaments of the Member States, the Secretary General of the United Nations, the Parliamentary Forum on SALW, the Assembly of the Inter-Parliamentary Union, the US Congress and the Pan-African Parliament.

RESOLUTION (1)

on water in developing countries

The ACP-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly,

— meeting in Bridgetown (Barbados) from 20 to 23 November 2006,
— having regard to Articles 177, 178, 179, 180, 181 and 181a of the Treaty establishing the European Community,
— having regard to the ACP-EU Partnership Agreement, signed at Cotonou (Benin) on 23 June 2000, and in particular Article 32 thereof, which recognises the need to improve the use of the natural resources of ACP States,
— having regard to the outcome of the 4th World Water Forum held in Mexico from 16 to 22 March 2006,
— having regard to Agenda 21 approved at the United Nations (UN) Conference on Environment and Development in Rio de Janeiro in 1992, and in particular paragraph 18 thereof,
— having regard to the political declaration adopted at the World Summit on Sustainable Development held in Johannesburg from 26 August to 4 September 2002, which identified priority action in five key areas with a view to achieving the UN Millennium Development Goals: water and sanitation, energy, health, agriculture and biodiversity,
— having regard to Agenda 21 approved at the United Nations (UN) Conference on Environment and Development in Rio de Janeiro in 1992, and in particular paragraph 18 thereof,
— having regard to the World Summit for Social Development held in Copenhagen (1995) and its declaration on water supply and sanitation in connection with fighting poverty,
— having regard to the Bonn International Freshwater Conference (2001),
— having regard to the UN Conference on Water held in Mar del Plata and its action plan for the assessment and use of water resources (1977),
— having regard to the Global Consultation in New Delhi (1990) relating to safe water and proper means of waste disposal,
— having regard to the Framework Document adopted at the 37th Organisation of African Unity (OAU) Summit, which states that the ninth of the ten objectives of the New Partnership for Africa’s Development (NEPAD) is ‘building and improving infrastructure, including information and communication technology (ICT), energy, transport, water and sanitation’,

(1) Adopted by the ACP-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly on 23 November 2006 in Bridgetown (Barbados).
— having regard to the European Parliament resolution of 4 September 2003 on water management in developing countries and priorities for EU development cooperation (P5_TA(2003)0377),

— having regard to the EU Water Initiative (EUWI) launched at the World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg (WSSD) in 2002,

— having regard to the ACP-EU Water Facility launched in 2004,

— having regard to the report on financing of water presented at the 3rd World Water Forum in Kyoto in March 2003,

— having regard to the UN World Water Development Report entitled ‘Water, a shared responsibility’, presented on 9 March 2006,

— having regard to the report by the Committee on Social Affairs and the Environment (ACP-EU 3916/06/fin.),

A. whereas 1.1 billion people do not have proper access to drinking water and 2.6 billion are without adequate sanitation (WHO/UNICEF Joint Monitoring Programme (JMP) 2004) (1),

B. whereas, owing to population growth, by 2015, 1.1 billion people will need to be provided with drinking water and 2.6 billion with sanitation facilities, including 400 and 410 million respectively in Africa; whereas drinking water requirements will continue to grow steadily, given that the world's population should stand at more than 9 billion people by 2050,

C. whereas water's importance to socioeconomic development is now well established, given that it is an important factor in productive activities and plays a leading role in farming, fishing, health, industry, energy, the protection of ecosystems and biodiversity and all forms of consumption for human well-being,

D. whereas access to drinking water is recognised as a fundamental human right, as endorsed by international conventions on social, economic and cultural rights, and whereas water, which is essential for life and human wellbeing, cannot be considered as merely a commodity, but must also be seen as a social good,

E. whereas water and sanitation are key cross-cutting issues for the MDGs and whereas it is essential to approach them in an appropriate manner if the MDGs are to be met,

F. whereas no strategy for combating poverty can ignore people's vital need for water and the need for equitable and sustainable management of this essential resource, in the interests of society as a whole,

G. whereas promoting sustainable, environmentally friendly water treatment provides a guarantee of clean water and an opportunity for fertilisation of agricultural land for food production; whereas the MDGs identify water as a crucial environmental factor,

H. whereas inadequate access to drinking water and sanitation is the cause of a large number of diseases; whereas infections linked to a lack of hygiene, and public health risks in general, are widespread in Africa and are essentially due to the contamination of water sources, improper water use or unhygienic behaviour,

I. whereas world water resources are inequitably distributed, with 60 % of freshwater supplies being located in nine countries (Brazil, the Russian Federation, Canada, Indonesia, China, Colombia, the United States, Peru and India), and whereas the countries where there is a shortage of freshwater are primarily islands, small countries and arid countries (including Israel, Libya, Mauritania, Cape Verde, Djibouti and Kuwait),

(1) http://www.wssinfo.org.
J. whereas three out of every four countries — which are often politically, culturally and economically different from each other — are located on the same international rivers, and whereas, in the absence of agreements on reasonable and equitable use, water, the source of life, becomes a potential source of tension and disputes that can degenerate into conflict,

K. whereas in African and Asian countries the availability of water is subject to numerous seasonal fluctuations and periodic cycles of drought and flooding, and whereas some coastal and island States are faced with the problem of saltwater infiltration of groundwater,

L. whereas drought is often caused by incorrect land use, over-grazing, deforestation and the implementation of major irrigation projects that are unsustainable,

M. whereas current trends as regards, among other things, demographics, urbanisation, climate change, the environment and economic structures are a major challenge in water management terms for developing countries, particularly those in the Sahel region,

N. whereas intensive production farming consumes about 70 % of freshwater for irrigation purposes, with 40 % losses, and whereas improving field irrigation techniques should result in major water savings and an increase in agricultural production that will offset the failure of rain-fed production to cover all food requirements,

O. whereas current water-for-food requirements will need to be increased by 50 % over the next 10 years in order to achieve the Millennium Development Goal of halving the number of malnourished people,

P. whereas in many rural parts of Africa the local population has no access to wells, a water supply network, a drinking water source or a rainwater cistern,

Q. whereas the development and promotion of appropriate sanitation technologies, the implementation of strategies mobilising endogenous financial resources and the involvement of communities will enable the use of sustainable sanitation methods to be stepped up at local level over the coming decade,

R. whereas a lack of the necessary financial resources to cover the renewal of infrastructure and the maintenance and management of existing facilities unavoidably results in the deterioration of water services and the exclusion of poor population groups, particularly in periurban areas, owing to the high cost of the services,

S. whereas rational water management requires the involvement of local populations — particularly women, who play an important role in water management — at national, local and regional levels, as well as appropriate charging so as to ensure universal access to the water required to cover essential needs while ensuring efficient water use by enhancing user responsibility,

T. whereas governments in developing countries are unable to set water rates at a level that reflects supply costs,

U. whereas a lack of the necessary technical, financial and human resources lies at the root of poor water resource and water service management,

V. whereas policies involving the privatisation of water resource management and the liberalisation of public services have accelerated the growth of the external indebtedness of southern countries, whose available resources are being earmarked for debt repayment rather than sustainable development and access to drinking water, education, health, housing and energy,

W. whereas private sector participation in water supply and sanitation remains low in developing countries,

X. whereas private participation in water services remains controversial due to the fact that universal, non-discriminatory use of water should be seen as a right; whereas, however, private sector participation can in some cases make a financial and management contribution to water services and contribute new technology and skills,
Y. whereas in most developing countries there is a genuine desire to take due account of water, hygiene and sanitation issues in development policies and strategies (decentralisation, combating poverty, integrated water resource management etc.) and water and sanitation financing initiatives (EU, NEPAD, African Development Bank (ADB), African Ministerial Council on Water (AMCOW) etc.),

Z. whereas with a view to meeting the MDGs, initiatives are being taken at European level, including the EUWI, which seeks to promote improved access to drinking water and sanitation for disadvantaged population groups in the ACP countries by actively addressing the funding deficit issue,

AA. whereas the EU and its Member States provide some EUR 1.4 billion per year for water and sanitation in developing countries, making the EU the largest aid provider in the world in this sector, and whereas this funding must be used to strengthen the public sector, which must guarantee access to water supply,

AB. whereas the EUWI aims to increase international mobilisation for achieving the MDGs and WSSD targets for drinking water and sanitation, through strategic regional partnerships involving all stakeholders — governments, civil society, local authorities and the private sector,

1. Reiterates that universal, non-discriminatory access to water is a right, and considers that development and anti-poverty policies and strategies should take account of people's vital water needs, particularly those of the most disadvantaged groups, and the need to ensure that water resources are managed equitably and sustainably in the interests of society as a whole;

2. Calls on ACP countries to introduce agricultural policies and strategies that promote irrigation methods which bring major water savings and to make control over water a priority with a view to achieving sustainable food security;

3. Recommends that ACP States introduce new water production and consumption methods based on sustainable integrated water resource management, taking account of the socioeconomic dimension of water and giving prominence to ecological agriculture based on the mobilisation of endogenous resources, the promotion of appropriate technologies and the involvement of all stakeholders;

4. Calls on the EU to pay special attention to ACP countries hard hit by water shortages and the attendant phenomena of drought and famine, by stepping up the provision of funding;

5. Acknowledges that privatisation of water in developing countries remains a highly sensitive and controversial issue which should be handled accordingly; calls for policies involving the privatisation of water resource management and the liberalisation of public services in ACP countries consistently to address social responsibility, and to be conditional on an affordable and increased supply of water and sanitation, in particular for the poorest, and on the principle that universal non-discriminatory use of water should be seen as a right;

6. Calls for an end to international pressure on developing countries, in negotiations conducted in bilateral and multilateral forums and through international financial institutions, to liberalise their water industries, which undermines their public services in this field;

7. Recalls that, while water and sanitation are widely cross-cutting issues, they have still not been adequately integrated into the development actions of other related sectors such as agriculture, industry, health, education, forestry and the environment;

8. Notes that water resources are deteriorating because of climate change and recalls that dynamic sustainable management of aquatic ecosystems is essential for prevention and mitigation of the negative impact of climate change;
9. Recalls that awareness-raising in sustainable management practices is essential to ensuring water supply for future generations, increasing food security and improving the hygiene and sanitation behaviour of the population;

10. Calls for integrated management of water resources taking account of all legitimate uses and demands, with an emphasis on the integration of land and water uses, upstream and downstream areas, coastal zone management and surface and groundwater management;

11. Recognises that gender and culture have a role in water and sanitation development and recalls that all approaches and solutions need to be adapted to local culture and gender roles;

12. Recalls that making progress towards sustainable access to, and management of, water in developing countries relies on strong local political commitment, transparency and stakeholder ownership;

13. Recalls the importance of fostering water-responsible behaviour among users, which implies a shift from a supply approach to a demand-driven one in water management;

14. Considers that public authorities should retain control of water management, providing access to it for all and maintaining scales of charges which are transparent to the public;

15. Considers that the financial resources marshalled as part of the Highly Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) initiative should help to provide funding for the vital sectors of water and sanitation, education and health;

16. Encourages the EU and the ACP countries to introduce innovative funding instruments such as local, national, regional and continental funds to support water policy and existing public and private funding instruments;

17. Calls on the EU to continue its efforts to ensure sustainable access to water for ACP countries, in order to make control over water a top strategic priority enabling ACP countries to reduce the structural vulnerability of the countries hardest hit;

18. Calls for strengthening of potential in the EU-ACP cooperation process in the area of water and sanitation; calls for a higher priority to be given by the ACP countries to water and sanitation in their development strategies and plans, and for a coordinated EU response through mechanisms such as the EUWI, the ACP-EU Water Facility and the development assistance programmes of the Commission and the Member States;

19. Calls on the EU to support research into water hydrants and the eradication of rivers in flatlands, which may lead to the creation of swamps, the evaporation of 50% of water resources and a deficiency in iodine available for river fish, which, in turn, may lead to an iodine deficiency among the population, especially among children;

20. Calls on the Commission to carry out an assessment and an evaluation of the ACP-EU Water Facility and the projects that it has funded, in order to determine whether specific funding for further initiatives in this field is to be set aside under the 10th EDF;

21. Recognises the need for a substantial increase in financial resources to cover infrastructure renewal, and maintenance and management of water and sanitation facilities, with a view to improving services and stepping up the involvement of a large section of the population which is unable to pay high water service prices;

22. Recalls that the main goals of the EUWI are to reinforce the political commitment to water and sanitation and to improve the effectiveness of water management through dialogue with all stakeholders including civil society and the public and private sectors, promoting a demand-driven approach and coordination of donor responses; calls on the Member States and the Commission to reinforce their support and involvement in pursuing these goals;
23. Calls for institutional strengthening and capacity building to improve water governance and combat corruption by means of legal and policy reforms, human resources development, training and networking;

24. Calls on ACP countries sharing the same water catchment area to improve coordination policies and intervention and water resource management strategies, in particular by setting up and/or building the capacities of regional organisations with responsibility for water policy, with a view to ensuring arbitration in disputes over water use and fostering the emergence of a culture of sharing common assets and support for more responsible management of those assets; calls on the governments of the EU Member States and the international community to support the ACP countries in their efforts;

25. Calls for extensive dialogue among various water users at local, national and cross-border level, with the aim of developing efficient cross-sectoral planning, providing adequate management of reservoirs, developing a database on bilateral water projects, promoting long-term institutional twinning and cooperation between higher education institutions, sharing local knowledge and conserving ecosystems;

26. Instructs its Co-Presidents to forward this resolution to the ACP-EU Council, the European Commission, the Secretary-General of the United Nations, the African Union and all organisations responsible for water management.

RESOLUTION (1)

on the review of negotiations on Economic Partnership Agreements (EPAs)

The ACP-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly,

— meeting at Bridgetown (Barbados) from 20 to 23 November 2006,
— having regard to Article 17(2) of its Rules of Procedure,
— having regard to its resolution of 21 March 2002 adopted in Cape Town (South Africa) (2),
— having regard to Article 37(1) of the Cotonou Agreement, which states that the EPA negotiations shall take place ‘during the preparatory period which shall end by 31 December 2007 at the latest’,
— having regard to the Declaration by the Trade Ministers of the Member States of the African Union adopted in Nairobi (Kenya) on 14 April 2006,
— having regard to the resolution of the European Parliament of 23 March 2006 on the development impact of Economic Partnership Agreements (EPAs) (3),
— having regard to the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT), in particular Article XXIV thereof,
— having regard to the decisions, resolutions and declarations adopted by the ACP Council of Ministers at its 83rd session, held in Port Moresby from 28 to 31 May 2006, in particular Decision No 2 on Economic Partnership Agreements,

A. whereas carrying out critical evaluation of EPA negotiations is necessary,

B. noting that in most regions the negotiations on EPAs have reached virtual deadlock in view of disagreements on what is understood by the ‘development dimension’, which should be central to discussions on EPAs,

C. whereas firm and specific undertakings have so far not been provided by the European side on the financing of the development dimension,

(1) Adopted by the ACP-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly on 23 November 2006 in Bridgetown (Barbados).