

European Parliament
Committee on Development
3 March 2008

Agenda point 9: Follow up of the Paris Declaration on Aid effectiveness

Presentation

Draftsman: Johan van Hecke (ALDE, BE)

- The Paris declaration should make it easier than its predecessor from Monterrey, to monitor the measurable indicators.
- At Accra, an action agenda should be adopted to speed up the process.
- The EU should maintain its leadership in the process.
- This report is meant to be a working document since the EC communication on the matter has not yet been presented. However, it is crucial that the EP starts reflecting on the issue now in order to be able to scrutinise the EC paper that is scheduled for May.
- There is much work to be done on the following issues: Decoupling assistance, technical cooperation, national input, division of labour.
- Suggested a thirteenth benchmark on dialogue with local authorities and parliamentary scrutiny.

Reactions

Alain Hutchinson (PES, BE)

- Stressed the importance of the report.
- Urged the EU to speak with one voice.
- Emphasised that the costs for immigration should not be borne by the development cooperation package.

Frithjof Schmidt (Greens/EFA, GER)

- Stressed the need for more coordination and harmonisation.
- Emphasised the need for improvements on the Donor Atlas. Said that the Council did not agree on the division of labour suggestion, since small countries feared that large ones would take on the leading donor role more frequently, due the size of their administration.

Glenys Kinnock (PES, UK)

- Recalled that this debate is not an either-or-debate. MS should both increase support AND make it more efficient.
- Stressed the need for a universal definition of ODA. Debt relief should not be included in the aid figures.
- Stressed the need for predictable funding.
- Emphasised the need for the MDG contracts to have more poverty focus. They should include human resources shortages and an evaluation of budget support (inputs and outcome).

Nirj Deva (EPP-ED, UK)

- Requested that the discussions in this Committee should focus more on how to create wealth.

Pierre Shapira (PES, FR)

- Stressed the problem of the lack of consistency and emphasised the need to adapt to national agendas i.e. local ownership.
- Requested a summary from the EC of all the financial instruments that are used for development aid.
- Urged the EP and the EC to set up structural dialogue with Concord.

Patrice Lenormand (EC)

- Declared that the EC will present its "package" on aid effectiveness in April. It will include a Donor Atlas, a report on the division of labour and 3 indicators.
- Stated that the EC is trying to have a long-term vision towards 2010.
- Recalled that the approach should not be too "institutionalistic". The focus should be on activities in the field and on discussions between the MS and EC. At the moment there is a framework but no implementation in the field.

Jasmine Berley (Aidwatch)

- Stressed that the EU has to do more, especially in the fields of division of labour and MDG contracting.
- Requested more transparency.
- Requested more parliamentary scrutiny.
- Proposed a hearing on aid effectiveness.

Wiske Jult (Concord, 11.11.11)

- Stressed the huge gap between commitments and reality.
- Stressed the need to improve accountability (independent monitors and auditors).

Alain Hutchinson (PES, BE)

- Recalled that this is a top priority debate. Arrange hearings in the national parliaments.

Johan van Hecke (ALDE, BE)

- We have made progress in 10 out of 12 indicators. But not in uncoupling of aid.
- Agreed with Shapira's point on the structured dialogue.

Agenda point 12: Exchange of views with Mr Stefano Manservisi, Director-General, DG DEV, European Commission, on the Commissions work programme and on regional integration.

Presentation

Stefano Manservisi (EC, DG DEV)

- The DG DEV priorities for 2008 will be:
 - 1, Aid effectiveness and coherence: EC to adopt package on 9 April.
 - 2, Cooperation with China on Africa: Establish dialogue and find common ground where the EC could work together with China. Communication to be presented in September.
 - 3, EU-Africa Strategy: Monitor progress in governance, infrastructure and political dialogue. Communication to be presented in October.
 - 4, Local governance: Reinforce the dialogue with local authorities in Member States and in partner countries. Communication to be presented in July. The work on this would later lead to the "Development Days" on the same theme.
 - 5, Overseas territories: Modernise the EU's policies and relations with these territories. Green-paper to be presented in June.
 - 6, Regional integration: EPAs are not the same thing as regional integration. An EPA should be part of the regional integration but it will not bring about integration on its own. A communication will be presented in June containing; a conceptual framework, a structure for political dialogue and commitments and a regional financial package from the EU.

Reactions

Glenys Kinnock (PES, UK)

- Expressed concern about EPA funding mechanisms. How to ensure that the financial envelope will be ready in time for the eventual costs of implementing the EPAs? Some countries and regions are already implementing EPAs without being certain to get financial compensation.
- Requested a study on how to improve the implementation of the EDF regional funds.

Alain Hutchinson (PES, BE)

- Urged the EC to be more proactive on issues such as the Tobin tax.
- Asked for climate change to be a priority.
- Stressed the importance of a dialogue with China on Africa.
- Asked for an evaluation of the progress of the EU-Africa Strategy.
- Questioned the need for a new DOM-TOM strategy.
- Stressed the problem of Media/press in development policies. There is a huge democratic deficit due to misinformation.

Thijs Berman (PES, NL)

- Questioned why this regional framework was not done before the negotiations of the EPAs.

Frithjof Schmidt (Greens/EFA)

- Stated that the EC was just trying to get out of difficulties by now turning its focus to the political side of the EPAs.
- Renewing the African Peace facility – military spending and development aid should not be mixed up.

Danutė Budreikaitė (ALDE, Lithuania)

- Stressed that the overseas territories should be taken care of by the associated European countries. As it is now, half of the population in the DOMTOM is below the poverty line.

Response

Stefano Manservigi

- Stated that the upcoming communication on regional integration was an attempt to get back to the real question on regional cooperation in a number of areas, not just trade, and would also present how the regional funds are to be committed.
- Recalled that the commitment to liberalise is over a long period, usually 15 years. This means that there will be three EDFs with possible targeted funding for regional integration during that time.

- Recalled that the contribution agreement with Eastern Africa is a sort of budget support or direct funding for EPA related matters.
 - Regretted that regional funds were not possible everywhere.
 - Emphasised that the Darfur crisis would have been much worse without the African Peace facility and recalled that the EC has a history of refusing MS requests for more military support under aid.
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