



Committee on Development

2016/2151(DEC)

6.3.2017

OPINION

of the Committee on Development

for the Committee on Budgetary Control

on discharge in respect of the implementation of the general budget of the European Union for the financial year 2015, Section III - Commission and executive agencies
(2016/2151(DEC))

Rapporteur: Paul Rübzig

SUGGESTIONS

The Committee on Development calls on the Committee on Budgetary Control, as the committee responsible, to incorporate the following suggestions into its motion for a resolution:

1. Recalls that 2015 was the target year for the Millennium Development Goals and for the Union's collective commitment to raise official development assistance (ODA) to 0,7 % of combined gross national income (GNI); deplores the fact that Union's collective ODA reached only 0,47% of GNI and that the target was therefore missed despite a considerable increase; notes further that, according to data published by the OECD's Development Assistance Committee, the ODA from Union institutions decreased in 2015; recalls the Commission's proposal for a new European Consensus on Development which clearly reaffirms the Union's collective commitment to increase to 0.7% the share of GNI devoted to ODA, as well as the specific targets set for the least developed countries; regrets the late publication of the Commission's annual report on external assistance; calls on the Commission to expedite the publication of its overdue Annual EU Accountability Report on Financing for Development for 2015;
2. Highlights the primary importance for an effective Union development policy of internationally agreed development effectiveness principles subscribed to by the Union such as ownership, untied aid, mutually agreed conditionalities, alignment to beneficiary countries' priorities;
3. Welcomes in this context the European Court of Auditors' special report No 9/2016 on the Union's external migration spending in Southern Mediterranean and Eastern Neighbourhood countries; highlights that the Court comes to the conclusion that the Union's external migration spending has failed to demonstrate its effectiveness, that it is impossible to measure its results, that the Commission's approach to ensure that migration has a positive development impact is unclear, that return and readmission support is having little impact and that respect for human rights of migrants, which should underpin all actions, remains theoretical and is only rarely translated into practice;
4. Welcomes the European Court of Auditors' special report No 15/2016 on humanitarian aid spending in the Great Lakes region; highlights that the Court concludes that humanitarian aid to the population affected by conflict in the African Great Lakes area was, generally, managed effectively by the Commission; stresses the stark contrast to migration spending and sees this as further proof that well planned development policies deliver much better results than short term driven migration activism;
5. Is very worried by a noticeable trend in recent Commission proposals to ignore legally binding provisions of the Regulation (EU) No 233/2014 of the European Parliament and of the Council¹ when it comes to ODA eligible expenditure and eligible countries for Development Cooperation Instrument spending; recalls that legality of the Union

¹ Regulation (EU) No 233/2014 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 March 2014 establishing a financing instrument for development cooperation for the period 2014-2020 (OJ L 77, 15.3.2014, p. 44).

spending is a key principle of sound financial management and that political considerations should not take precedence over clearly spelled out legal provisions if the Commission wants to remain credible on rule of law issues; reminds the Commission in this context about the recent judgment of the Court of Justice¹ on cooperation with Morocco and the Western Sahara issue, in which the Court ruled that the Union has consistently infringed international law;

6. Supports the use of budget support in general, but urges the Commission to more clearly assess and define the development outcomes to be achieved through budget support in each case and above all to enhance control mechanisms concerning recipient States' conduct in the fields of corruption, respect of human rights, rule of law and democracy; expresses deep concern about the potential use of budget support in countries lacking democratic oversight, either due to the lack of a functioning parliamentary democracy, freedoms for civil society and the media, or due to a lack of capacity of oversight bodies;
7. Calls on the Commission to incorporate an incentive-based approach to development by introducing the more-for-more principle, taking as an example the European Neighbourhood Policy; believes that the more and the faster a country progresses in its internal reforms to the building and consolidation of democratic institutions, the eradication of corruption, the respect for human rights and the rule of law, the more support it should receive from the Union; stresses that this “positive conditionality” approach, accompanied by a strong focus on financing small-scale projects for rural communities, can bring real change and guarantee that Union tax payers' money is spent in a more sustainable manner; on the other hand, strongly condemns any attempt to make aid conditional on border control;
8. Regrets that no prior consultation of Parliament took place when setting-up the EU Emergency Trust Fund (EUTF) for Africa although Parliament enjoys reinforced oversight of European Development Fund programming based on a political commitment made by the Commission; calls for more effective efforts to enhance the transparency of decisions on EUTF projects and underlines the lack of an adequate format for the regular consultation of Parliament and regrets that no action has been taken in this respect.

¹ Judgment of the Court of Justice of 21 December 2016, *Council v Front Polisario*, C-104/16 P, ECLI:EU:C:2016:973.

RESULT OF FINAL VOTE IN COMMITTEE ASKED FOR OPINION

Date adopted	28.2.2017
Result of final vote	+: 20 -: 1 0: 2
Members present for the final vote	Nirj Deva, Raymond Finch, Doru-Claudian Frunzulic , Enrique Guerrero Salom, Heidi Hautala, Maria Heubuch, Teresa Jiménez-Becerril Barrio, Stelios Kouloglou, Arne Lietz, Linda McAvan, Norbert Neuser, Vincent Peillon, Maurice Ponga, Cristian Dan Preda, Lola Sánchez Caldentey, Elly Schlein, Eleftherios Synadinos, Eleni Theocharous, Bogdan Brunon Wenta, Anna Záborská, Željana Zovko
Substitutes present for the final vote	Ádám Kósa, Paul Rübig

FINAL VOTE BY ROLL CALL IN COMMITTEE ASKED FOR OPINION

20	+
GUE/NGL	Stelios Kouloglou, Lola Sánchez Caldentey
NI	Eleftherios Synadinos
PPE	Teresa Jiménez-Becerril Barrio, Ádám Kósa, Maurice Ponga, Cristian Dan Preda, Paul Rübig, Bogdan Brunon Wenta, Željana Zovko, Anna Záborská
S&D	Doru-Claudian Frunzulic , Enrique Guerrero Salom, Arne Lietz, Linda McAvan, Norbert Neuser, Vincent Peillon, Elly Schlein
VERTS/ALE	Heidi Hautala, Maria Heubuch

1	-
EFDD	Raymond Finch

2	0
ECR	Nirj Deva, Eleni Theocharous

Key to symbols:

+ : in favour

- : against

0 : abstention