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on Gender mainstreaming in EU external relations and peace-building/nation-building
(2008/2198(INI))

Committee on Foreign Affairs

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MOTION FOR A EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT RESOLUTION

on Gender mainstreaming in EU external relations and peace-building/nation-building (2008/2198(INI))

The European Parliament,

- having regard to the principles laid down in Articles 2, 3(2), 13, 137(1)(i) and 141 of the EC Treaty,
- having regard to the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union proclaimed in 2000,¹
- having regard to the Lisbon Treaty², signed on 13 December 2007 in Lisbon,
- having regard to the United Nations Convention of 18 December 1979 on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW),
- having regard to the Fourth World Conference on Women held in Beijing in September 1995, the Declaration and the Platform for Action adopted in Beijing as well as the subsequent outcome documents adopted at the United Nations Beijing +5 and Beijing +10 Special Sessions on further actions and initiatives to implement the Beijing Declaration and the Platform for Action adopted respectively on 9 June 2000 and on 11 March 2005,
- having regard to the EU Agenda for Action on Millennium Development Goals adopted by the Council on 18 June 2008,
- having regard to United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 adopted on 31 October 2000, (UNSCR 1325 (2000)) and United Nations Security Council Resolution 1820 adopted on 19 June 2008 (UNSCR 1820 (2008)) on women, peace and security,
- having regard to the Conclusions of the General Affairs and External Relations Council of 23 and 24 May 2005 on the European Security,
- having regard to the Council document ‘Implementation of UNSCR 1325 as reinforced by UNSCR 1820 in the context of ESDP’ of 8 December 2008,
- having regard to Council Conclusions on promoting gender equality and gender mainstreaming in crisis management of 13 November 2006,
- having regard to the Council Conclusions on combating violence against women, particularly in the ESDP framework, and all forms of discrimination against them of 8 December 2008,
- having regard to the "Comprehensive approach to the EU implementation of the United

¹ OJ C 364, 18.12.2000

² OJ C 306, 17.12.2007

Nations Security Council Resolutions 1325 and 1820 on women, peace and security" of 8 December 2008,

- having regard to the ongoing work on a Commission Staff Working Paper "Toward an EU Action Plan on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment in EU External Action",
 - having regard to the development of the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) since 2004, and in particular to the Commission's progress reports on its implementation, and to the action plans adopted jointly with Armenia, Azerbaijan, Egypt, Georgia, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Moldova, Morocco, the Palestinian Authority, Tunisia and Ukraine,
 - having regard to the enlargement process and to the Commission's progress reports,
 - having regard to its previous resolutions on women's empowerment in international and development policy and their role in security and peace, in particular to that of 1 June 2006¹, that of 16 November 2006² and to that of 13 March 2008³,
 - having regard to its resolutions on the European Neighbourhood policy, on the EU's enlargement strategy and on the neighbouring countries and regions of the EU,
 - having regard to its resolutions on external assistance instruments,
 - having regard to Rule 45 of its Rules of Procedure,
 - having regard to the report of the Committee on Foreign Affairs and the opinion of the Committee on Women's Rights and Gender Equality,
- A. whereas the realisation of women's human rights, women's empowerment and agency is not only important for addressing gender inequality and implementing a true gender dimension in the EU's external relations but they are essential to the successful implementation of the EU's external policies, including in the areas of aid, development, enlargement, neighbourhood policy, conflict resolution, security and peace building and international trade,
- B. whereas although the EU Member States are party to all major international frameworks on gender equality and women's rights and a number of policy documents exist at the EU level, the practical commitment to furthering gender mainstreaming and women's empowerment in external policies is still weak and the implementation of the existing policy documents is modest,
- C. whereas despite considerable improvements in the promotion of gender equality over the recent years, the main EU institutions, i.e. the Commission, Council and European Parliament, lack enough specially appointed staff to implement the declared gender objectives in the areas of external policy and enlargement and most existing staff responsible for gender issues is either double or triple-hatted with other tasks,

¹ Texts adopted, P6_TA(2006)0245

² Texts adopted, P6_TA(2006)0497

³ Texts adopted, P6_TA(2008)0103

D. whereas the EU needs a holistic and coherent approach to gender mainstreaming,

General remarks

1. Recognises that the EU institutions have attached increasing importance to gender mainstreaming and women's empowerment but underlines that much remains to be done to put the political commitments into practice, and stresses the importance of adequate funding;
2. Welcomes the adoption of a "Comprehensive approach to the EU implementation of the UNSCR 1325 (2000) and 1820 (2008) on women, peace and security", as well as guidelines on violence against women and girls and combating all forms of discrimination against them; calls on the Member States, which have not yet adopted their national action plans on UNSCR 1325 to urgently comply with the request by the Security Council that the States do so; invites the Commission to provide technical assistance and aid to third countries willing to develop national strategies for the implementation of the above-mentioned UNSCR resolutions;
3. Calls on the Commission to speed up its work and propose by July 2009, in close cooperation with the Member States and the Council Secretariat, an "EU Action Plan on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment in EU External Action";
4. Stresses that gender equality should be systematically included in the EU's political dialogue and policy discussions with partner countries;
5. Asks the European Parliament's delegations to address the issues related to gender equality and women's empowerment in its relations with third country parliaments; underlines the importance of providing support and assistance to national parliaments of third countries, with a view to strengthening their capacity to introduce gender perspective to their legislative work;
6. Underlines the importance of civil society organisations in women's empowerment; calls on the Commission to channel adequate financial support to them and to promote the participation of women's NGOs in political dialogue processes with partner countries, as well as in peace negotiations around the world;
7. Calls on the Commission and the Member States to promote coherence in their policy approach; asks the existing diverse policy frameworks to be collated into an EU Consensus on Gender, covering both internal and external policies;
8. Asks the Commission to address and prioritise more systematically gender inequalities in the programming and implementation of the external assistance instruments, in particular as regards assistance to the security sector reform; strongly calls for gender-specific objectives and activities to be included in country strategy papers and for a better mainstreaming of gender aspect through them; underlines the need for a holistic approach in the use of external assistance instruments, including the European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights (EIDHR), Instrument for Stability (IfS), and thematic programmes such as "Investing in People", in order to best achieve the goals of gender equality and women's empowerment;

9. Reiterates the need to focus not only on women but also on gender relations between men and women that generate and perpetuate gender inequalities; believes that as a consequence projects should take in consideration both men and women;
10. Stresses that the EU should pay special attention to needs of most vulnerable and socially excluded women, in particular disabled women, refugees or women from minority groups;
11. Calls on the Commission to further develop procedures, benchmarks and indicators in order to ensure that it fulfils its commitments with regard to gender equality in its external policy;
12. Considers that the Institute on Gender Equality should become operational as soon as possible and that its mandate be extended to external policies;
13. Calls on the Commission and the Member States to implement the Brussels Call for Action to Address Sexual Violence in Conflict and Beyond;
14. Underlines the need to capitalise on the EU's partnership with the United Nations, drawing on its global expertise in advancing gender equality and empowerment of women, with a view to enhancing effectiveness and impact of EU policies and aid, and to ensure coherence of external support for partner countries to fulfil their relevant obligations;

Gender Mainstreaming in decision-making of the EU

15. Considers the current number of personnel working on gender issues within the Commission and the Council inadequate; calls on them to allocate more staff to the structures in charge of the EU's external action with specific responsibility for gender mainstreaming and women's empowerment to the structures in charge of the EU's external action;
16. Notes the continued lack of women on high-level posts in the Commission and the Council structures, and calls, in particular, for more efforts to boost the number of women among the heads of EU delegations and the EU Special Representatives; stresses that the future External Action Service should be created with a better balance of men and women, particularly on the high-level posts and that it should include more staff responsible for gender issues;
17. Calls on the Member States to send more women to ESDP mission and operations and asks for an increased participation of women on all levels and in all phases of the planning and implementation; underlines the need to include gender expertise from the very start of the planning of a mission or an operation as well as the importance of systematic and substantial gender training prior to sending staff out;
18. Commends the initiatives to provide gender-related training to staff of the ESDP missions and of the headquarters and to a considerable effort undertaken by the Commission to train its staff particularly in the delegations; reiterates that all staff at every level of planning, programming and implementation of EU's external policies should be adequately trained; asks the Commission and the Member States to ensure that compulsory training includes all staff in missions and delegations, including the

management, and that guidance on gender issues and women's empowerment is provided to them;

19. Underlines the importance of gender-sensitive budgeting;
20. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission and the Governments and parliaments of the Member States.