



EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

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Plenary sitting

16.3.2011

B7-0194/2011

MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION

further to Question for Oral Answer B7-0018/2011

pursuant to Rule 115(5) of the Rules of Procedure

on the negotiations regarding the renewal of the Protocol to the Fisheries Partnership Agreement between the European Union and Mauritania

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on behalf of the S&D Group

European Parliament resolution on the negotiations regarding the renewal of the Protocol to the Fisheries Partnership Agreement between the European Union and Mauritania

The European Parliament,

- having regard to the Recommendation from the Commission to the Council to authorise the Commission to open negotiations on behalf of the European Union for the renewal of the protocol to the Fisheries Partnership Agreement with Mauritania¹,
 - having regard to the Protocol setting out the fishing opportunities and financial contribution provided for in the Fisheries Partnership Agreement between the European Community and the Islamic Republic of Mauritania for the period 1 August 2008 to 31 July 2012²,
 - having regard to the Fisheries Partnership Agreement between the European Community and the Islamic Republic of Mauritania³,
 - having regard to Council Regulation (EC) No 1801/2006 of 30 November 2006 on the conclusion of the Fisheries Partnership Agreement between the European Community and the Islamic Republic of Mauritania⁴,
 - having regard to the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea of 10 December 1982 (UNCLOS),
 - having regard to the FAO Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries,
 - having regard to the summary of the agreed record of the Joint Committee held in Nouakchott from 22 to 25 March 2010⁵,
 - having regard to the Long-distance Regional Advisory Committee (LDRAC) position regarding the Green Paper on the CFP reform⁶,
 - having regard to Rules 115(5) and 110(2) of its Rules of Procedure,
- A. whereas the current Fisheries Partnership Agreement between the EU and Mauritania has been in place since 2006 and will be renewed automatically in 2012 while the relating protocol will have to be renegotiated,
- B. whereas a significant part of both national and foreign industrial vessels still use non-

¹ SEC (2001)137 final.

² OJ L 203, 31.7.2008, p. 4.

³ OJ L 343, 8.12.2006, p. 4.

⁴ OJ L 343, 8.12.2006, p. 1-3.

⁵ reference to be made.

⁶ reference to be made.

selective gears, which gives reason for concern regarding the sustainability of the fishing activities in Mauritanian waters,

- C. whereas Article 61 and Article 62 of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea clearly state that Fisheries Agreements shall only cover surpluses and shall not lead to an overexploitation of marine resources,
- D. whereas point 6.18 of the FAO Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries calls on States to protect the rights of fishermen and fish workers, particularly those engaged in subsistence, small-scale and artisanal fisheries, to a secure and just livelihood, as well as to preferential access, where appropriate, to traditional fishing grounds and resources in the waters under their national jurisdiction,
- E. whereas the FPA has seemingly contributed to the overexploitation of some stocks, particularly regarding octopus, and has therefore reduced fishing opportunities for Mauritanian small-scale fishermen and lead to unfair competitive advantages for the EU industry due to subsidized access fees for EU vessels,
- F. whereas the Mauritanian Institute for Oceanographic Research and Fisheries (IMROP) reports on high levels of bycatch especially for trawlers targeting cephalopods,
- G. whereas Mauritanian investments paid from EU contribution tend to be too short-term oriented to build up viable local infrastructure for fish landings and fish processing,
- H. whereas the Mauritanian fishing fleet is in a precarious situation as most of the vessels are of Chinese origin, very old, and they do not meet strict security and hygiene standards,
- I. whereas under the current protocol vessel owners have to pay only a relatively small share of the access costs,
- J. whereas the European Parliament and the general public today have insufficient access to information regarding the implementation of the Fisheries Partnership Agreement and the relating protocol,

General considerations

1. Welcomes the proposal of the European Commission to open negotiations on the renewal of the protocol to the Fisheries Partnership Agreement between the European Union and the Islamic Republic of Mauritania;
2. Welcomes the European Commission's proposal to introduce a human rights clause into the agreement;
3. Underlines that the Fisheries Partnership Agreement (FPA) between the EU and Mauritania should be maintained, since it can be mutually beneficial if it is adjusted and correctly implemented; to this end, it is necessary that the FPA contains effective surveillance mechanisms to ensure that funds earmarked for development and in particular for infrastructure building in the fisheries sector are properly used;
4. Calls on the Commission to ensure that the new protocol does not run counter the

Millennium Development Goals, but it rather contributes to achieving these goals;

5. Calls on the Commission to ensure that crews are properly trained and that all social conditions are respected; in particular concerning the overarching goal of the elimination of child labour;
6. Calls on the Commission to facilitate Mauritania's integration to the global economy, inter alia by promoting fair employment conditions for employees in the sector and by creating an environment that encourages private investment and ensures the development of a dynamic, viable and competitive private sector, notably by a framework supporting European investments and technology transfer;

Sustainability

7. Urges the Commission to ensure that fishing activities that fall under the Fisheries Partnership Agreement meet the same sustainability criteria as fishing activities in EU waters; moreover, calls on Mauritanian authorities and the Commission to ensure that strict sustainability criteria are respected by all vessels exercising fishing activities in Mauritanian waters (either from the EU, Mauritania or third countries);
8. Calls on the Commission to establish a dialogue with Mauritania aiming to help the country further develop a responsible fisheries policy which meets both conservation requirements and its objective to promote the economic development of fisheries resources;
9. Calls on the Commission to take urgent measures to reduce by-catch by European vessels fishing in Mauritanian waters;
10. Welcomes the Commission's commitment to ensure that fishing opportunities for EU vessels do not exceed the surplus of fisheries resources in Mauritanian waters within the Maximum Sustainable Yield;
11. Calls on the Commission to take the findings of the FAO working group on small pelagic fish off Northwest Africa into account when estimating the surplus;
12. Calls on the Commission to provide the European Parliament with detailed information regarding the state and surplus of all important stocks before concluding the protocol;
13. Calls on the Commission to ensure that the FAO Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries is being respected, especially regarding the commitment to grant preferential access for artisanal fishers to resources in Mauritanian waters;
14. Calls on the Commission to ensure that EU commitments regarding landings in Mauritania and catch declarations are respected;
15. Calls on the Commission to launch initiatives to improve Mauritania's landing infrastructure and value adding facilities in order to boost the FPA's impact on local economy;
16. Calls on the Commission to improve scientific and technical knowledge of the fisheries

concerned, taking into account the existing and necessary work in the field carried out at the appropriate regional level and taking into consideration the likely impact of fishing activities on the environment;

Governance and financial contribution

17. Calls on the Commission and the government of Mauritania to start a real dialogue, involving all stakeholders who carry out fishing activities in Mauritanian waters to explore necessary steps to make Mauritanian fisheries more sustainable, to make the FPA consistent with other EU policies like development policy and to ensure the sustainable development of the Mauritanian fisheries sector;
18. Calls on the Commission to consider altering the underlying funding scheme in order to fairly set the level of fishing opportunities for EU vessels and the financial contribution of the EU; therefore proposes to negotiate the level of the financial contribution based on Mauritania's needs to develop a sustainable fisheries sector and build up value adding facilities, while the level of fishing opportunities should be negotiated on the basis of the surplus of fisheries resources within the Maximum Sustainable Yield;
19. Welcomes the Long Distance Regional Advisories Committee's willingness to make a clear distinction between the cost of access for the EU fleet (to be covered at an acceptable level by ship-owners and representing a fair share of the value of the catches) and the financial contribution in the framework of FPA to development aid; therefore calls on the European Commission to rebalance the level of ship owners' fees;
20. Welcomes the Long Distance Regional Advisories Committee's willingness to develop strategies , in collaboration with the Mauritanian authorities and the EU, for the sustainable management of fisheries as defined by Mauritania, in particular by taking account of the development programmes elaborated at national and/or regional level with EU assistance in accordance with cooperation or association agreements;
21. Calls on the Commission to foster better global governance of fisheries at financial and political level, in particular by strengthening Mauritania's capacity building and by fighting corruption and combating illegal, unregulated and unreported fishing;

Transparency

22. Calls on the Commission and the Council to allow observers from the European Parliament to attend Joint Committee meetings, in order to make sure that the implementation of the Protocol is subject to parliamentary scrutiny;
23. Calls on the Commission and the Mauritanian government to ensure that civil society, especially representatives of Mauritanian small-scale fishermen, takes part in Joint Committee meetings and is involved in the procedure of setting up and implementing the new protocol;
24. Calls on the Commission to make both past and future Evaluation Reports regarding the implementation of the FPA, as well as reports on the use of the financial contribution, publicly available;

25. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission, the governments and parliaments of the Member States, and the Government and Parliament of Mauritania.