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*Committee on Development*

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**2013/2148(INI)**

30.8.2013

## **OPINION**

of the Committee on Development

for the Committee on Foreign Affairs

on the future of EU-ASEAN relations  
(2013/2148(INI))

Rapporteur: Ricardo Cortés Lastra

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## SUGGESTIONS

The Committee on Development calls on the Committee on Foreign Affairs, as the committee responsible, to incorporate the following suggestions in its motion for a resolution:

1. Congratulates the ASEAN Member States on their spectacular economic progress in recent years; is nevertheless aware that economic and social inequalities continue to exist amongst and within the ASEAN countries and considers that there is still a need for a new EU strategy to promote development and combat inequality in these countries; believes that such a strategy should be based on the 2005 European Consensus on Development as well as on the principles laid down by the European Commission in its Agenda for Change<sup>1</sup>;
2. Believes that such a strategy should be based in particular on the following principles: policy coherence for development, long-term aid effectiveness, priority for basic social needs, in particular health and education, and participation by national stakeholders, including national parliaments, local authorities, and development NGOs and civil society;
3. Points out that, while the overall objective of EU-ASEAN cooperation in the period 2011-2013 is to contribute to ASEAN regional integration, e.g. by enabling the setting-up of the ASEAN Community by 2015, cross-sectoral programmes include, among others, negotiating Free Trade Agreements; against this background, reiterates that a "pro-growth strategy" should not be confused with a long term development strategy that entails the financing of long-term objectives, such as health, education, access to energy in rural areas, support of small farmers, etc.; in particular, urges the Commission to ensure that programmes financed under the DCI have a direct link with the overriding objective of eradication of poverty, in line with Policy Coherence for Development, as enshrined in article 208 of the TFEU;
4. Calls on the Commission to coordinate the principles and objectives of such a policy together with the traditional and emerging donors, particularly China and India, using the United Nations' millennium development goals and post-2015 millennium goals as its point of reference; appeals to the emerging donors to take up development responsibilities in the region in line with their role as emerging powers and to move towards the introduction of a tax on financial transactions to support development cooperation;
5. Takes the view that in devising their long-term and medium-term development strategy the ASEAN countries ought to address without delay the major social, urban and environmental challenges they face in connection to sustainable management of resources, in particular water, protection of biodiversity, food security and climate change, such as the response to natural disasters which frequently affect ASEAN countries. In this respect calls on the Commission to support the efforts of ASEAN countries and for tighter EU-ASEAN cooperation.

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<sup>1</sup> COM(2011)0637 final, 13.10.2011 Increasing the impact of EU Development Policy: an Agenda for Change.

6. Also notes that poverty continues to be a problem in these countries and that it mainly affects women, the poorly-skilled, rural areas and minority ethnic or religious groups; therefore sees a need to improve the distribution of wealth and promote social justice at all levels, since inequality impedes economic growth and the attainment of the millennium goals and may give rise to social conflicts;
7. Stresses that the EU's actions in the region need to be prepared in collaboration with the authorities in the countries in question, in a way that is consistent with the new reality and the needs of the region and that at the same time takes into account the individual needs and situation of each country, such that EU aid contributes to balanced growth in the region;
8. Welcomes the fact that ASEAN Charter stresses the importance of the rule of law, good governance, democracy and constitutional government; regrets however that the Charter lacks mechanisms for dispute settlements and sanctions in case of human rights violations;
9. Considers that the ASEAN countries should advance towards a new phase of inclusive economic and social development, with particular emphasis on promoting their peoples' human, social, labour and economic rights, in order to ensure fairer and more equal societies; to achieve this, considers that they should use their increased economic wealth to strengthen their social security and protection networks; urges equally the EU to enhance its cooperation on human rights so as to contribute to making the ASEAN Intergovernmental Commission on Human Rights (AICHR) effective for the promotion and protection of human rights;
10. Urges the EU to upgrade its assistance and cooperation to combat corruption, through, inter alia, encouraging the ratification and implementation of the UN Convention Against Corruption;
11. Also encourages the ASEAN states to ensure that their enterprises fully and effectively apply national and ILO labour standards and environmental rules and create a climate more favourable to the development and activities of trade unions, as well as urging them to take action, in coordination with civil society and national and regional authorities, to defend social and labour rights; calls on national and foreign enterprises operating in ASEAN countries to act in accordance with the principles of corporate social responsibility;
12. Takes the view that, in a context in which the economic development of these countries will in future focus less on exports and more on domestic consumption, efforts by ASEAN countries to combat poverty among marginalised and vulnerable social groups and to include them in society may provide these countries with huge development potential;
13. Urges the Commission to carry on helping ASEAN countries to continue to reduce disparities between countries and to accompany them along the path of political, economic and institutional integration at regional level, paying special attention to the

LDCs (Cambodia, Laos and Myanmar), as well as to promote access to financing, via microcredits in particular, for vulnerable sections of the population, such as women and ethnic minorities, in the ASEAN countries;

14. Denounces the negative impact of EU biofuel policy on land-grabbing in South Asia, whereby EU Member States constitute a key driving force for the rapid expansion of oil palm production (especially in Indonesia and Malaysia), leading to dispossession and/or adverse incorporation of the rural poor into oil palm plantation; in contrast, deems essential to support, within the context of development aid, the rights to land resources of poor people in developing countries, following a right-based approach;
15. Urges for the activation of the EU 2004 Land Policy Guidelines to counter land-grabbing; in particular, stresses that donors should engage in land policy which are geared towards the defence and strengthening of small-scale family agriculture;
16. Is concerned at the urban development challenges faced by the ASEAN countries as a result of their economic growth, including the management of migration flows from the countryside to cities, urban planning and provision of infrastructure and basic services, measures to prevent the spread of shanty towns and the advisability of using clean, renewable energy sources to combat pollution; calls on the Commission to collaborate with the ASEAN countries on strategies to address these problems;
17. Calls on the Commission to strengthen measures intended to promote the development of the ASEAN countries' administrative capacities and that of their regional integration bodies and to promote improvements in their governance.

## RESULT OF FINAL VOTE IN COMMITTEE

<b>Date adopted</b>	28.8.2013
<b>Result of final vote</b>	+: 20 -: 0 0: 0
<b>Members present for the final vote</b>	Thijs Berman, Véronique De Keyser, Eva Joly, Filip Kaczmarek, Miguel Angel Martínez Martínez, Gay Mitchell, Bill Newton Dunn, Michèle Striffler, Ivo Vajgl
<b>Substitute(s) present for the final vote</b>	Fiona Hall, Isabella Lövin, Judith Sargentini
<b>Substitute(s) under Rule 187(2) present for the final vote</b>	Pino Arlacchi, Zuzana Brzobohatá, Alejandro Cercas, Lara Comi, Emer Costello, James Nicholson, Carmen Romero López, Iuliu Winkler