



EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

2009 - 2014

Committee on Development

2012/2026(INI)

11.9.2012

DRAFT OPINION

of the Committee on Development

for the Committee on Foreign Affairs

on the EU Strategy for the Horn of Africa
(2012/2026(INI))

Rapporteur: Michèle Striffler

PA_NonLeg

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. Welcomes the adoption in November 2011 of a strategic framework for the Horn of Africa, since this will tend to enhance the coherence of the European Union's external action in this strategic region compared with the very fragmented approach taken hitherto based on widely differing instruments; in this connection, also welcomes the appointment in January 2012 of an EU Special Representative (EUSR) for the Horn of Africa, Alex Rondos, and pays tribute to the work he has already achieved; is well aware that, less than a year after this strategy was adopted and the EUSR took up his duties, it may not yet be possible to identify or measure any significant improvement in the coherence of the EU's approach in the region;
2. Welcomes, in the interests of both regional development aid and humanitarian aid, the new plan for the Horn of Africa proposed by the Commission in 2012 known as SHARE (Supporting Horn of Africa Resilience), which seeks to be an instrument linking short-term humanitarian aid to long-term development, in order to break the vicious circle of crises that afflict the region; fully supports the Commission in this project to strengthen the link between relief, rehabilitation and development (LRRD); calls for the EU to give strong support by its actions to the resilience of the many pastoral communities living in the region;
3. Takes the view that boosting regional security and combating terrorism and piracy, while essential, must not eclipse the absolute necessity of supporting as a first priority the eradication of poverty in the region, particularly since the European Union has an obligation under its founding Treaty to take account of the objectives of development cooperation – foremost among which are the reduction and eradication of poverty – in the policies that it implements which are likely to affect developing countries (Article 208(1) of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union); notes that all the countries of the Horn of Africa are developing countries and as such – apart from Sudan and South Sudan, which have not signed the Cotonou Agreement – have received EUR 2 billion in development aid (of which EUR 644 million went to Ethiopia alone) for indicative national and regional programmes under the 10th EDF (2008-2013); notes that, during the same period, again under the 10th EDF, the East Africa, Southern Africa and Indian Ocean region is receiving EUR 625 million (mainly for the Inter-Governmental Authority on Development(IGAD)) to eradicate poverty in the countries of the region and help them attain the Millennium Development Goals; recalls, finally, that the African Peace Facility, a sub-instrument of the EDF, gives financial support to the African Union mission in Somalia (AMISOM);
4. Takes the view that, as the world's main development aid and humanitarian aid distributor in the region, the European Union (Member States and Commission), thanks in part to the centralisation of its diplomatic activity in the EEAS and the EUSR, the success of Operation Atalanta and the presence in the region of the diplomatic and military forces of certain Member States, could do more to eradicate the endemic poverty in the region and the pockets of anarchy and lawlessness that exist there;

5. Considers it desirable to seize the twofold opportunity presented by the opening up of the succession to the late Ethiopian Prime Minister Meles Zenawi, who died on 20 August 2012, and by the election on 10 September 2012 of the new Somali President Hassan Sheikh Mohamud, to work – helped by the Strategic Framework for the Horn of Africa, with the support of the EUSR in the region, the EEAS and national diplomats, as well as with the support of the African Union – towards the establishment of normal diplomatic and economic relations between Ethiopia and Eritrea, and the resolution of the Somali crisis, which would benefit the development of the whole region; notes that the Great Lakes region, which borders the western fringes of the Horn of Africa, is also one of the world's most unstable regions, including some seriously under-developed countries that are plagued by armed violence (Democratic Republic of Congo) and even by wars with one or more of their neighbours (tensions between Rwanda, which is part of the Horn of Africa in the wider sense, and the Democratic Republic of Congo); stresses that in implementing the European strategy for the Horn of Africa we cannot ignore its possible repercussions for the much-needed development of its neighbouring regions (mainly the Great Lakes, Central Africa and Southern Africa).