



EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

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Committee on Development

2012/2145(INI)

24.9.2012

DRAFT OPINION

of the Committee on Development

for the Committee on Foreign Affairs

on the Annual Report on Human Rights and Democracy in the World 2011 and
the European Union's policy on the matter
(2012/2145(INI))

Rapporteur: Edvard Kožušník

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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. Underlines the fact that the EU should use its soft power and further promote and consolidate the values of freedom, democracy, respect for human rights, and the principles of the rule of law and good governance upon which it is founded, through political dialogue and cooperation with third countries;
2. Calls on the Commission to strengthen the instrument for the promotion of democracy and human rights worldwide in order to support democratic reforms and governance, to address in particular grassroots organisations and to reinforce election observation missions and the election observation activities of local civil society;
3. Recalls that building legitimate democratic foundations and civil society is a long-term process requiring internal, regional and international support;
4. Recalls that the EU should demand that partner governments benefiting from development assistance be seriously committed to creating stable and genuine democracies with respect for human rights in addition to functioning economies; EU funding in particular should be monitored and tangible results required from repressive regimes which fall short of their international commitments;
5. Stresses the importance of encouraging an independent free press and media, which are crucial actors in preserving the rule of law and fighting corrupt practices;
6. Emphasises the importance of human rights clauses and effective dispute mechanisms in trade policies, partnerships and trade agreements between the EU and third countries;
7. Regrets that the European Neighbourhood Policy has delivered mixed results in the past in terms of creating lasting democratic structures and economic development, as reforms have led to cosmetic rather than fundamental changes; stresses the need to learn from past policy mistakes and to apply a new approach that would be aligned with respect for human rights and support for democratic rule.