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Committee on Foreign Affairs

2006/2250(INI)

17.4.2007

OPINION

of the Committee on Foreign Affairs

for the Committee on Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs

on Policy priorities in the field against illegal immigration of third-country nationals
(2006/2250(INI))

Draftsman: Ioannis Kasoulides

SUGGESTIONS

The Committee on Foreign Affairs calls on the Committee on Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs, as the committee responsible, to incorporate the following suggestions in its motion for a resolution:

1. Is concerned about the fact that the European Union (EU) remains under constant pressure from illegal immigration, leading to humanitarian crises, the trafficking in and exploitation of human beings and loss of lives;
2. Is convinced that the efficient combating of illegal immigration can only be ensured within the framework of a common European migration policy that includes a European policy on migration and development; welcomes the Commission's Communication on Policy priorities in the fight against illegal immigration of third-country nationals;
3. Recalls that illegal immigration concerns all Member States and that Member States receiving a disproportionately large number of illegal immigrants should enjoy the solidarity of the EU;
4. Believes that the external dimension strategy should aim at strengthening the EU's influence on global migration processes, combining the securing of external borders and the fight against human trafficking with a deepening of cooperation with third countries on migration management, with a view to alleviating the push factors in the countries of origin and steering immigration into legal channels; supports a vigorous implementation of the Global Approach to Migration adopted by the European Council in December 2005, as well as the measures adopted at the European Council in December 2006;
5. Stresses that any measure to combat illegal immigration taken by the EU or in cooperation with third countries must be compatible with fundamental human rights and should not deny refugees in need access to international protection;
6. Calls on the Member States to provide all necessary technical, logistical, personal and financial means to enhance the operational capacity of FRONTEX and to intensify the border management cooperation between the Member States aimed at saving lives at sea, tackling illegal immigration, combating trafficking in human beings and providing rapid assistance to Member States facing emergencies linked to high influxes of immigrants;
7. Points out that combating trafficking in human beings, particularly trafficking in women and children, is an EU priority, making it necessary to allocate adequate financial resources to that activity;
8. Calls for questions concerning illegal immigration to have priority in the European Union's relations with third countries, especially the countries of origin and/or transit of illegal immigrants;
9. Calls on the Commission and the Council to develop partnerships with countries of origin and transit on migration management, encompassing institutions and capacity-building, technical assistance, guarantees of respect for international law, readmission obligations, combating the mafias that specialise in trafficking in people, information campaigns and

quotas for legal immigration; calls on the Commission to step up its efforts to conclude readmission agreements with the countries of origin and transit of illegal immigration flows;

10. Regrets that the EU still faces obstacles which impede an efficient return of illegal immigrants, and urges the Commission and the Council to create an operational system under which EU travel documents would be acquired in due time and accepted by third countries;
11. Calls on the Commission to take all appropriate measures to expand the sources of information which are available in countries of origin on the possibilities of, and conditions attaching to, legal immigration into the EU;
12. Calls on those EU Member States which have not yet signed the agreements on readmission to take all necessary steps in that regard as soon as possible;
13. Supports the Commission's plan to strengthen the migration management aspect of the European Neighbourhood Policy, and calls for regional-level cooperation on migration to be reinforced in the southern and the eastern neighbourhood of the EU;
14. Recalls that the EU's Mediterranean neighbours and eastern neighbours in particular receive the majority of immigrants originally en route to Europe; considers it crucial to ensure that the fundamental human rights of those immigrants are respected, with special attention being paid to the rights of unaccompanied minors; stresses the need for the EU to strengthen its cooperation with all Mediterranean partner countries as regards the management of migration flows, and to provide them with support in combating illegal immigration; points out the importance of strengthening links between North- and sub-Saharan African countries and with the Asian countries of origin;
15. Calls on the Commission and the Council to pursue the development of the Regional Protection Programmes in cooperation with countries of origin and transit, and to inform Parliament of the experience gained with the pilot projects implemented so far; welcomes in this respect the Commission's signing of the Cooperation Agreement with Mali, with the support of France and Spain, for the opening of the first Migration Information and Management Centre in that country;
16. Is convinced that one of the keys to the successful control of illegal immigration lies in addressing the factors that push people out of their home countries, including a major commitment by the EU to the settlement of conflicts, effective development aid through massive investment in health and education, and fulfilment of the Millennium Development Goals; is convinced that Member States should not adopt national measures regularising the situation of illegal immigrants because this creates a suction effect; calls on the Commission to intensify the EU-Africa dialogue on development and migration, including trade and agricultural policies;
17. Calls on the EU Member States to take all appropriate measures in the framework of the new strategy for Africa adopted by the Commission with a view to realisation of the Millennium Development Goals in accordance with the timetable set by the UN;
18. Supports the opening of legal channels for immigration; emphasises that efforts to

strengthen circular migration should be intensified in order to eliminate the negative effects of the brain-drain from the countries of origin; considers such efforts to be an essential part of bilateral relations with countries of origin;

19. Stresses the importance of introducing special standards to protect women, children and people with disabilities;
20. Advocates the promotion of stronger financial ties with countries of origin, including a more transparent, more dependable and less expensive remittance system in the international financial markets; considers such a system to be an essential step towards facilitation of productive investment in the countries of origin as well as an important part of the fight against the financing of organised crime;
21. Calls on the Commission and the Council to verify, carefully and regularly, the cooperation afforded by third countries to the EU in the field of illegal immigration and draws attention in that connection to the importance of the Mechanism for monitoring and evaluating third countries in the area of combating illegal immigration, set up in 2003 by the Council at the behest of the Thessaloniki European Council;
22. Asks the Commission to explore the possibilities for more efficient cooperation with the UNHCR and the International Organization for Migration as well as with relevant NGOs; welcomes the fact that the December 2006 European Council agreed to support the first meeting of the Global Forum on International Migration and Development, to be held in Brussels in July 2007, and calls for the European Parliament to be involved in the preparations for, and to ensure its participation in, the Global Forum.

PROCEDURE

Title	Policy priorities in the field against illegal immigration of third-country nationals
Procedure number	2006/2250(INI)
Committee responsible	LIBE
Opinion by Date announced in plenary	AFET 26.10.2006
Enhanced cooperation	
Draftsman Date appointed	Ioannis Kasoulides 28.11.2006
Discussed in committee	27.2.2007 12.4.2007
Date adopted	12.4.2007
Result of final vote	+: 28 -: 1 0: 0
Members present for the final vote	Christopher Beazley, Panagiotis Beglitis, Michael Gahler, Ana Maria Gomes, Alfred Gomolka, Richard Howitt, Georgios Karatzaferis, Bogdan Klich, Eugen Mihăescu, Francisco José Millán Mon, Cem Özdemir, Ioan Mircea Paşcu, Tobias Pflüger, Bernd Posselt, Jacek Saryusz-Wolski, Gitte Seeberg, Marek Siwiec, Konrad Szymański, Antonio Tajani, Jan Marinus Wiersma
Substitute(s) present for the final vote	Laima Liucija Andrikienė, Alexandra Dobolyi, Árpád Duka-Zólyomi, Glyn Ford, Tunne Kelam, Evgeni Kirilov, Aloyzas Sakalas
Substitute(s) under Rule 178(2) present for the final vote	Wiesław Stefan Kuc, Marcin Libicki
Comments (available in one language only)	