



EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

2009 - 2014

Committee on Development

2011/2032(INI)

4.5.2011

OPINION

of the Committee on Development

for the Committee on Foreign Affairs

on EU external policies in favour of democratisation
(2011/2032(INI))

Rapporteur: Alf Svensson

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. Emphasises that democracy and human rights are interdependent; argues that free and fair elections are necessary, but not sufficient, for democratic consolidation;
2. Considers, nevertheless, that combating poverty and removing obstacles to countries' development can make a decisive contribution to democratic processes;
3. Stresses that democracy as a system of government provides mechanisms for allocating political power and managing conflict which are essential for stable and peaceful societies; notes, however, that democracy must be home-grown and cannot be artificially imposed by outside agents; argues that the EU, together with the international community, can play an active role in supporting democratic consolidation processes;
4. Takes the view that for elections to be considered democratic, free and fair, certain conditions must be met beforehand: respect for political and civic rights, respect for freedom of expression and information, equal access to the media and respect for the principle of political pluralism, in order to offer voters a real choice;
5. Considers that if a democratisation process is to be successful, it is crucial that it should address the social and economic development of the country concerned, in order to ensure that the inhabitants' basic rights, such as to education, health and employment, are met;
6. Notes that European aid channelled as budget support to authoritarian states does not always guarantee democratic development and that it is the outputs of aid, rather than the inputs, that our assessment of aid effectiveness should focus on;
7. Emphasises the role that legitimate democratic political parties, genuine social movements and a free press can play in safeguarding the public interest by overseeing the transparency and accountability of governments, thereby enabling states to protect human rights and promote social and economic development;
8. Insists on strict eligibility criteria for budget support; insists that the Commission must refrain from using this arrangement in countries where transparency in public spending cannot be guaranteed, and that budget support must always be accompanied by action to develop the receiving country's parliamentary scrutiny and audit capacities and to enhance transparency and public access to information, and that civil society should be involved in its monitoring;
9. Considers that an independent judiciary and media are essential in shaping and regulating the democratic process with the aim of strengthening the rule of law, building democratic institutions, including a functioning parliament, making political pluralism a reality, and strengthening the role of civil society;
10. Encourages aid donors to treat democracy-building as a political and moral imperative,

rather than simply a technical exercise, and to develop their local knowledge of the recipient countries so that aid can be targeted effectively to suit local circumstances;

11. Recognises the important role played by women in democratisation, particularly in recent times; calls on the Member States and the EU, in cooperation with the wider international community, to support women in their struggle for equal rights, gender equality and empowerment;
12. Emphasises the need to enhance civil society capacities, through education and awareness-raising, and to enable them to participate in political processes; stresses that a close partnership between the public and private sectors, as well as the empowerment of oversight institutions, including national parliaments, are key to promoting democracy;
13. Calls on the EU to prioritise in-depth dialogue on democratic values and norms with actors engaged in all democracy-strengthening processes; emphasises that building and strengthening democratic institutions can help to enhance economic development and reduce poverty;
14. Stresses the importance of drawing up an analysis of the local human rights situation, which should form the basis for all development interventions; calls on the Commission to include a section on the state of democracy and human rights in all Country and Regional Strategy Papers, and to provide more detailed data on the impact of democracy-support initiatives;
15. Welcomes the creation of a Human Rights and Democracy Directorate within the European External Action Service, and calls on the Vice-President of the Commission/High Representative to ensure that EU's overseas representations have a contact person for human rights and democracy;
16. Calls for targeted support for non-extremist social movements, genuinely independent media and political parties working for democracy in authoritarian states and new democracies in order to promote public participation, support sustainable multi-party systems, and improve human rights; takes the view that the European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights should have a key role to play in this regard.

RESULT OF FINAL VOTE IN COMMITTEE

Date adopted	2.5.2011
Result of final vote	+: 22 -: 0 0: 0
Members present for the final vote	Thijs Berman, Corina Crețu, Leonidas Donskis, Charles Goerens, Catherine Grèze, Eva Joly, Miguel Angel Martínez Martínez, Gay Mitchell, Norbert Neuser, Bill Newton Dunn, Maurice Ponga, Birgit Schnieber-Jastram, Alf Svensson, Eleni Theoharous, Ivo Vajgl
Substitute(s) present for the final vote	Kriton Arsenis, Proinsias De Rossa, Agustín Díaz de Mera García Consuegra, Enrique Guerrero Salom, Martin Kastler, Krzysztof Lisek, Csaba Óry, Bart Staes
Substitute(s) under Rule 187(2) present for the final vote	Edit Bauer