

EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

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Session document

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B6-0398/2005 }
B6-0402/2005 }
B6-0403/2005 }
B6-0406/2005 }
B6-0407/2005 }
B6-0410/2005 } RC1rev

JOINT MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION

pursuant to Rule 108(5) of the Rules of Procedure, by

- Maria Martens, John Bowis and Fernando Fernández Martín, on behalf of the PPE-DE Group
- Margrietus van den Berg, Marie-Arlette Carlotti, Glenys Kinnock and Miguel Angel Martínez Martínez, on behalf of the PSE Group
- Thierry Cornillet and Fiona Hall, on behalf of the ALDE Group
- Frithjof Schmidt, Marie-Hélène Aubert, Margrete Auken and Carl Schlyter, on behalf of the Verts/ALE Group
- Luisa Morgantini, Gabriele Zimmer and Vittorio Emanuele Agnoletto, on behalf of the GUE/NGL Group
- Brian Crowley, Ģirts Valdis Kristovskis and Eoin Ryan, on behalf of the UEN Group

replacing the motions by the following groups:

- PPE-DE (B6-0398/2005)
- UEN (B6-0402/2005)
- Verts/ALE (B6-0403/2005)
- ALDE (B6-0406/2005)
- GUE/NGL (B6-0407/2005)
- PSE (B6-0410/2005)

on poverty

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PE 360.579v01-00}
PE 360.583v01-00}
PE 360.584v01-00}
PE 360.587v01-00}
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PE 360.591v01-00} RC1rev

European Parliament resolution on poverty

The European Parliament,

- having regard to the ‘Quintet against Hunger’ formed at the World Summit for Action Against Hunger, which led to the Global Call for Action against Poverty launched by President Lula of Brazil at the World Social Forum in January 2005,
 - having regard to the New York Declaration on Action against Hunger and Poverty of 20 September 2004, signed by 111 national governments, including all the EU Member States,
 - having regard to the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and the forthcoming UN High Level Event reviewing progress towards the MDGs in September 2005,
 - having regard to Commission Communications COM(2005)132, COM(2005)133 and COM(2005)134 of 12 April 2005 on accelerating progress towards attaining the Millennium Development Goals,
 - having regard to the meeting of the Development Council held in May 2005,
 - having regard to Rule 108(5) of its Rules of Procedure,
- A. whereas extreme poverty affects over one billion people, and whereas in sub-Saharan Africa about 300 million people live in absolute poverty and millions of people die each year from a lack of health care, clean water, decent housing and adequate nutrition,
- B. whereas the latter half of 2005 presents an historic opportunity for the EU and its Member States to demonstrate their leadership on development issues at the G8 Summit in Gleneagles, at the MDGs Conference in New York in September and at the World Trade Organisation (WTO) Ministerial Conference in Hong Kong in December,
- C. whereas attaining the MDGs and combating global poverty will require all donors to increase the quantity and improve the quality of aid, make trade fairer and relieve unsustainable debt, and whereas two thirds of developing countries spend more on servicing debt than on basic social services,
- D. whereas much aid remains ‘tied aid’, meaning that money is often given on the condition that goods and services are bought from the donor country; whereas the ‘tying’ of aid is estimated to inflate procurement costs by around USD 5 billion,
- E. whereas, although EU ODA flows have grown, a large part of this growth is due to debt relief operations, which runs contrary to the Monterrey consensus according to which the HIPC (Highly Indebted Poor Countries) initiative should be fully financed through additional resources,

- F. whereas the debt cancellation announced by Mr Blair on the eve of the G8 summit covers USD 2 billion a year, applies to 18 of the 165 developing countries and concerns only International Financial Institutions (IFIs),

General

1. Welcomes the UK Presidency's commitment to prioritise development and the fight against poverty with a special focus on Africa; calls on the UK to use its Presidency of the G8 to put poverty at the heart of the international as well as the European agenda;
2. Expresses its grave concern at the fact that sub-Saharan Africa has still not achieved and is still not on track to achieve even one of the eight MDGs by the target date of 2015;
3. Welcomes therefore the recognition of the development of Africa as a priority for the EU and the fact that efforts will be stepped up to help African countries to attain the MDGs;
4. Stresses that the EU must put women and girls at the heart of its development policy if it is to make progress on achieving the MDGs;
5. Considers that a genuine fight against poverty requires the establishment of a comprehensive sustainable development policy in order to build up developing countries' production capacities;
6. Believes that the fight against poverty must be based on recognition of the right of a country or a region to democratically define its own policies, priorities and strategies to protect its population's livelihood and social, economic and cultural rights;
7. Notes the critical role that civil society organisations have to play to be a driving force within countries in pressing development concerns, mobilising broad-based movements and creating grass-roots pressure to hold leaders accountable for their commitments; therefore welcomes the initiative of the worldwide alliance 'The Global Call to Action Against Poverty';
8. Underlines the urgent need for increased investment in developing countries; in this respect notes the importance of international discussion aimed at identifying innovative and additional sources of finance for public investments and policies which directly address the Millennium Development Goals and lay the foundations for private-sector-led growth;
9. Underlines that development aid is only one factor that can contribute towards achieving the MDGs, and that it needs to be accompanied by other measures such as sound, accountable and transparent institutions, compliance with human rights and international commitments, gender equality, appropriate trade and investment rules, knowledge transfers and security;

Aid levels and quality of aid

10. Welcomes the Council's reaffirmation of its commitment to give a minimum of 0.7 % of GDP in aid by 2015, and 0.56 % by 2010; calls on the Commission and Council to ensure that Member States live up to these promises by establishing a monitoring mechanism that

enables Member States' aid levels to be examined in a transparent way at all future Development Council meetings;

11. Welcomes the active involvement of the new Member States, which joined the EU after 2002, in the Community donor policy and notes with satisfaction their commitment to reaching an ODA/GNI ratio of 0.17 % by 2010 and a ratio of 0.33 % by 2015;
12. Calls for better use of existing aid, in particular by reordering priorities to focus on the MDGs and by improving monitoring of public money given by the EU in order to tackle corruption and increase transparency;
13. Calls on the Commission to do more to coordinate the aid efforts of the EU and Member States; calls, in this context, for EU coordination and complementarity strategies to also include the private sector as well as civil society actors;
14. Welcomes the Commission proposal for a regular report on the State of the Union as regards aid effectiveness in collaboration between the Commission and Member States;
15. Expresses concern that only three Member States (Ireland, Sweden and the UK) have completely untied their bilateral aid and that some Member States still 'tie' almost all their aid; calls on all EU Member States to offer their aid to developing countries free of 'ties' and to comply with the EU doctrine that aid contracts be awarded to local, regional or national contractors wherever possible;
16. Calls for the rapid adoption and implementation of the legislative proposal for the untying of EC aid;
17. Calls on the Commission and Member States to spend at least 20 % of their development aid on health and education; notes with concern that both the EU and Member States are far from achieving this target; underlines that without significant investment in human development and health care the Millennium Development Goals will not be reached;
18. Stresses the importance of speeding up and increasing support for vaccine programmes and programmes to fight diseases such as AIDS, TB and malaria as well as neglected diseases;
19. Calls on the Commission and Member States to ensure that sexual and reproductive health and rights are put at the heart of the MDGs agenda in September and are recognised as crucial in the fight against HIV/AIDS;

Trade and coherence

20. Calls on industrialised countries, and on the EU in particular, not to spare any efforts to obtain a development-friendly outcome of the Doha Development Agenda, delivering increased market access for both industrial and agricultural goods as well as services for developing countries, establishing a timetable for eliminating trade-distorting agricultural export support and providing effective special and differential treatment for developing

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countries;

21. Underlines the importance of fair trade in working towards poverty eradication; welcomes the pledges made by the Commission in the European Parliament in June to give more technical and budgetary support to fair trade producers and the commitment to increase coherence between all policies of the EU, and particularly development, trade and agriculture;
22. Calls for the provision of appropriate trade-related technical assistance, including capacity building, in order to maximise the development opportunities stemming from trade, support the development of small and medium-sized enterprises and comply with international social, labour, environmental and health standards;
23. Underlines the key importance of policy coherence in increasing the efficiency and quality of aid; calls on the EU to lead global efforts and to increase its own and Member States' coherence of policy areas such as trade, environment, agriculture and migration with development commitments;
24. Calls on the EU Member States to make public the activities of their export credit agencies for transparent and democratic scrutiny;

Debt relief

25. Welcomes the G8 commitment to debt cancellation entailing the cancellation of outstanding obligations of HIPC countries to the IMF, the World Bank and the African Development Fund; underlines, however, that this debt cancellation excludes a number of debt-ridden low-income countries, that debt relief is no panacea in the fight against poverty, as many poor countries have low debt levels, and that debt relief carries the moral hazard of not necessarily addressing the needs of the poorest or the most needy countries;
26. Calls on EU Member States to ensure that all debt relief is additional to aid commitments; calls on the UK in particular to insist upon this at the G8 Summit with the US, which has made pledges on debt relief at the expense of more generous aid commitments;
27. Underlines that debt relief should prioritise LDCs and only be undertaken on the condition that money gained by governments from such relief be channelled towards helping the poorest in their communities;
28. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission, the EU Member States and their parliaments, the Heads of State or Government of the G8 nations, the UN Secretary-General, the governments of the ACP countries and the Least Developed Countries, the African Union, the IMF, the World Bank, the Development Assistance Committee of the OECD and the Governments of the Paris Club.