



TEXTS ADOPTED

P8_TA(2019)0170

EU-Afghanistan Cooperation Agreement on Partnership and Development (resolution)

European Parliament non-legislative resolution of 13 March 2019 on the draft Council decision on the conclusion, on behalf of the Union, of the Cooperation Agreement on Partnership and Development between the European Union and its Member States, of the one part, and the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, of the other part (15093/2016 – C8-0107/2018 – 2015/0302M(NLE))

The European Parliament,

- having regard to draft Council decision (15093/2016),
- having regard to the Cooperation Agreement on Partnership and Development between the European Union and its Member States, of the one part, and the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, of the other part¹, signed on 18 February 2017 by Vice-President of the Commission / High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy (VP/HR) Federica Mogherini,
- having regard to the request for consent submitted by the Council on 6 February 2018 in accordance with Article 37 of the Treaty on European Union (TEU) and with Articles 207, 209, 218(6)(a), second subparagraph, and 218(8), second subparagraph, of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU) (C8-0107/2018),
- having regard to its legislative resolution of 13 March 2019 on the proposal for a Council decision²,
- having regard to the provisional application of the parts of the Cooperation Agreement on Partnership and Development (CAPD) under the exclusive competence of the EU as of 1 December 2017,
- having regard to its resolution of 13 June 2013 on the negotiations on an EU-Afghanistan cooperation agreement on partnership and development³,
- having regard to its previous resolutions relating to Afghanistan, in particular its

¹ OJ L 67, 14.3.2017, p. 3.

² Texts adopted, P8_TA(2019)0169.

³ OJ C 65, 19.2.2016, p. 133.

- resolutions of 16 December 2010 on a new strategy for Afghanistan¹, of 15 December 2011 on budgetary control of EU financial assistance to Afghanistan², of 12 March 2014 on Pakistan's regional role and political relations with the EU³, of 8 October 2015 on the death penalty⁴, of 26 November 2015 on Afghanistan, in particular the killings in the province of Zabul⁵, of 28 April 2016 on attacks on hospitals and schools as violations of international humanitarian law⁶, of 5 April 2017 on addressing refugee and migrant movements: the role of EU External Action⁷, of 13 September 2017 on EU political relations with India⁸, of 14 December 2017 on the situation in Afghanistan⁹,
- having regard to the Council conclusions of 19 November 2018 and of 16 October 2017 on Afghanistan,
 - having regard to the Joint Communication from the VP/HR and the Commission to the European Parliament and the Council of 24 July 2017 on Elements for an EU Strategy on Afghanistan (JOIN(2017)0031),
 - having regard to the 2014-2020 Multi-annual Indicative Programme for Afghanistan, within the Union's Development Cooperation Instrument,
 - having regard to the EU Country Roadmap for Engagement with Civil Society in Afghanistan 2018-2020,
 - having regard to the closure of the European Union Police Mission in Afghanistan (EUPOL Afghanistan) in 2016,
 - having regard to the report of the UN Secretary-General of 10 September 2018 entitled 'the situation in Afghanistan and its implications for international peace and security',
 - having regard to the EU-Afghanistan Joint Way Forward (JWF) on migration issues, of 2 October 2016,
 - having regard to UN Security Council Resolutions 2210 (2015) and 2344 (2017), and to the mandate of the UN Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA),
 - having regard to the report of the UN Special Rapporteur on the human rights of internally displaced persons of 12 April 2017 on his mission to Afghanistan,
 - having regard to the request of the ICC Chief Prosecutor Fatou Bensouda of 3 November 2017 to start an investigation on the war crimes and crimes against humanity allegedly committed in Afghanistan since 1 May 2003,
 - having regard to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child,

¹ OJ C 169 E, 15.6.2012, p. 108.

² OJ C 168 E, 14.6.2013, p. 55.

³ OJ C 378, 9.11.2017, p. 73.

⁴ OJ C 349, 17.10.2017, p. 41.

⁵ OJ C 366, 27.10.2017, p. 129.

⁶ OJ C 66, 21.2.2018, p. 17.

⁷ OJ C 298, 23.8.2018, p. 39.

⁸ OJ C 337, 20.9.2018, p. 48.

⁹ OJ C 369, 11.10.2018, p. 85.

- having regard to the Geneva Ministerial Conference on Afghanistan of 27-28 November 2018,
 - having regard to the results of the Brussels International Conference on Afghanistan of 5 October 2016, co-chaired by the European Union, and to the mutual commitments made at the international conferences on Afghanistan held in Bonn on 5 December 2011, Tokyo on 8 July 2012, and London on 4 December 2014,
 - having regard to the Tashkent Conference on Afghanistan of 26-27 March 2018,
 - having regard to the ‘Heart of Asia’ process launched in Istanbul on 2 November 2011,
 - having regard to the Kabul Declaration of 22 December 2002 on good-neighbourly relations,
 - having regard to the NATO-led UN mandated International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) (2003-2014) and to the conclusions of the NATO summit held in Brussels on 24-25 May 2017, with regard to the continuation of the training, advisory and assistance mission ‘Resolute Support’ (2014 to the present),
 - having regard to Afghanistan’s Humanitarian Response Plan 2018-2021,
 - having regard to the Self-Reliance through Mutual Accountability Framework, agreed to at the Brussels Conference on Afghanistan of 4-5 October 2016,
 - having regard to Rule 99(2) of its Rules of Procedure,
 - having regard to the report of the Committee on Foreign Affairs, the opinion of the Committee on Development and the position in the form of amendments of the Committee on International Trade (A8-0058/2019),
- A. whereas on 10 November 2011, the Council adopted a decision authorising the Commission to negotiate a CAPD between the European Union and the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan¹; whereas the CAPD has been provisionally and partly applied since 1 December 2017, before the European Parliament gave its consent;
 - B. whereas on 13 January 2016, the VP/HR and the Commission presented to the Council the Joint Proposal for Council Decisions on the signing and conclusion of the CAPD, as an agreement between the European Union and Afghanistan ('EU-only');
 - C. whereas while agreeing with the substance of the CAPD, Member States expressed preference for a 'mixed' agreement with provisional application, and therefore asked the Commission and the VP/HR to revise the proposals accordingly in order to take into account mixed and provisional application;
 - D. whereas the CAPD was signed on 18 February 2017;
 - E. whereas the CAPD will form the basis of EU-Afghan relations for the next 10 years and could be automatically extended for periods of five years;
 - F. whereas Parliament has been partially but not fully informed throughout negotiations;

¹ Council Decisions of 10 November 2011 (16146/11 and 16147/11).

whereas Parliament received the Council's negotiating directives for the European External Action Service (EEAS) only on 16 March 2018, rather than in November 2011 when Parliament was informed about the decision to open negotiations;

- G. whereas this legal framework builds on the current EU Strategy on Afghanistan as well as the EU's extensive external financing assistance;
- H. whereas the CAPD will be the first contractual relationship between the EU and Afghanistan, confirming the EU's commitment to Afghanistan's future development during the 'decade of transformation' (2014-2024), strengthening historical, political and economic ties between the two parties;
- I. whereas the CAPD reflects the principles and conditions on which the EU-Afghanistan future partnership will be based (Titles I and II), including the essential elements clauses on human rights and weapons of mass destruction (WMD) non-proliferation; whereas the CAPD provides for the possibility of cooperation in a broad range of areas, including development (Title III), trade and investment (Title IV), justice and the rule of law (Title V), including the fight against organised crime, money laundering and counter-narcotics, cooperation on migration and a potential future readmission agreement, and sectoral cooperation (Title VI);
- J. whereas the CAPD will also enable the EU and Afghanistan to jointly address global challenges such as nuclear security, non-proliferation and climate change;
- K. whereas Afghanistan is at a crucial point, meaning that if further efforts are not taken, then all of the effort, progress, and sacrifice so far put into the development of Afghanistan risks being lost;
- L. whereas the emergence of the terrorist threat from the Daesh-linked group known as Islamic State-Khorasan Province (IS-KP) contributed significantly to further degradation of the security situation; whereas in May 2018 the Afghan Government had control of 56 % of the districts of Afghanistan and 56 % of the territory, containing 65 % of the population, with 32 % of the districts being contested and 12 % under insurgent control^{1,2};
- M. whereas since 2002, the European Union and its Member States collectively have been the largest international donor to Afghanistan and its people, providing over EUR 3.66 billion in development and humanitarian aid; whereas according to the 2014-2020 Multi-annual Indicative Programme for Afghanistan, a new development fund of EUR 1,4 billion is allocated for the period 2014-2020; whereas Afghanistan's GDP is currently USD 20 billion and its growth rate has shrunk since 2014; and whereas the Afghan economy still faces a number of challenges such as corruption, low revenue collection, poor infrastructure and anaemic job creation;
- N. whereas since 2001, many EU Member States, NATO partners and allied countries have contributed to the stabilisation and development of Afghanistan with military and

¹ EASO Country of Origin Information Report, Afghanistan Security Situation - Update, May 2018, https://coi.easo.europa.eu/administration/easo/PLib/Afghanistan-security_situation_2018.pdf

² US Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction (SIGAR), Quarterly report to the United States Congress, 30 October 2018, <https://www.sigar.mil/pdf/quarterlyreports/2018-10-30qr.pdf>

civilian resources, suffering heavy casualties and losses; whereas a stable and independent Afghanistan that can provide for itself and deny safe haven to terrorist groups is still in the vital security interests of NATO, the EU and its Member States; whereas the EU Member States still have over 3 000 military personnel in Afghanistan participating in NATO's Resolute Support mission;

- O. whereas there are 2,5 million registered refugees, and between 2 and 3 million undocumented Afghans in Iran and Pakistan; whereas there are more than 2 million internally displaced persons in Afghanistan, more than 300 000 of whom were displaced in 2018; whereas many of these individuals suffer from food insecurity, inadequate shelter, insufficient access to sanitation and health facilities and a lack of protection, and whereas many are children classified as particularly vulnerable to the risk of child labour, sexual abuse or potential recruitment to criminal groups; whereas more than 450 000 Afghan people have returned to Afghanistan or been deported from Iran since the beginning of 2018; whereas the Government of Pakistan has announced that the 1.7 million Afghan refugees registered in the country will need to be forcibly returned to Afghanistan;
- P. whereas according to the UN, corruption in Afghanistan undermines the legitimacy of the state, posing a serious threat to good governance and sustainable development by preventing 'a real economy from emerging';
- Q. whereas Afghanistan is a low-income, post-conflict and landlocked country, representing special challenges to the international community and its institutions;
- R. whereas according to the Global Adaptation Index, Afghanistan is one of the world's most vulnerable countries to climate change;
- S. whereas new threats and international crises are arising, causing the public to lose focus, support, and concern for the situation in Afghanistan;
- T. whereas an estimated 87 % of Afghan women suffer from gender-related violence; whereas Afghanistan ranks 153rd out of 160 countries on the 2017 UN Gender Inequality Index;
- U. whereas in 2017, opium cultivation in Afghanistan reached a record high, with a 63 % increase compared to 2016; whereas illicit trafficking of opiates further fuels instability and insurgency and increases funding to terrorist groups in Afghanistan;
- V. whereas for the first time the Afghan budget of 2018 adheres to international standards for projections and accounting;
- W. whereas the EU Police Mission in Afghanistan came to a close in 2016 after nine years of progress;

Politico-strategic aspects

- 1. Remains committed to supporting the Afghan Government in its efforts to build a secure and stable future for the people of Afghanistan by undertaking key reforms in order to improve governance and the rule of law, to fight terrorism and extremism, to achieve sustainable peace and development, to build legitimate, democratic institutions, to foster resilience in the face of the national and regional security challenges, to ensure the respect of human rights, including the rights of women, children, ethnic and

religious minorities, to fight corruption, to counter narcotics, to improve fiscal sustainability and to foster inclusive and sustainable economic growth and social and rural development, providing young people, who represent two thirds of the population, with a better future; stresses that a peaceful resolution to the conflict in Afghanistan is needed and that all efforts should be directed towards that most urgent objective;

2. Underscores that the long-term development of Afghanistan will depend on accountability, good governance, the sustainable provision of human security, including the reduction of poverty and the creation of job opportunities, access to social and health services, education and the protection of fundamental freedoms and human rights, including the rights of women and minorities; stresses the need to manage affairs in a manner that ensures inclusive economic growth and favourable conditions for sustainable foreign investment that benefits the people of Afghanistan, with full respect for social, environmental and labour standards;
3. Is concerned by the fragility and instability of the central government and the lack of control it exerts in much of the country, which exacerbates the conflict's impact on the civilian population; calls on the EU and the international community to facilitate mediation in cases such as unresolved post-electoral issues;
4. Calls on the EU to assist in efforts against the long-term trend of inter-ethnic tensions that contributes to the disintegration of central power and to support the rich multi-ethnic fabric of Afghan society;
5. Emphasises its long-term support for credible, free, fair and transparent elections, in line with international standards, and expresses its support for EU election observation in the country, including observation of the 2019 presidential election; stresses that due to chronic political rivalries the result of these elections will have a tremendous impact on the future stability of the Afghan Government;
6. Emphasises the vast economic potential of the country owing to its geographical position and its human and natural resources;
7. Emphasises the EU's substantial financial and political support for Afghanistan's social and economic development, humanitarian aid and regional connectivity; urges further efforts towards joint programming between the EU and its Member States;
8. Stresses, in this regard, the need for increased EU-US policy coordination and dialogue on Afghanistan and regional issues;
9. Welcomes the Joint Communiqué adopted at the UN-hosted Geneva Ministerial Conference on Afghanistan of 27-28 November 2018, with a view to the commitments made at the 2016 Brussels Conference on Afghanistan;

Role and responsibility of regional actors

10. Recalls that Afghanistan is a landlocked country situated at the junction connecting Asia and the Middle East and recognises that support and positive co-operation from neighbouring countries and regional powers, in particular China, Iran, India, Russia and Pakistan, are essential to the stabilisation, development and economic viability of Afghanistan; regrets that a stable and successful Afghanistan is not always the end goal for these regional actors and underlines the crucial role of these countries in the stabilisation and peace process; asks neighbouring countries to refrain in future from

blocking Afghan exports, as has occurred in the past;

11. Stresses that the mobility and sustained activity of terrorist networks operating in Afghanistan, and also in Pakistan, contribute to the instability of the situation in the whole region;
12. Underlines that Afghanistan is often subject to antagonistic objectives of regional powers; urges them to fully support peace efforts in Afghanistan; supports regional cooperation forums, however is concerned at the parallel proxy involvement of some of Afghanistan's neighbours in the conflict, undermining peace efforts; calls on those neighbours to refrain from involving proxies in their rivalries in Afghanistan and urges both neighbours and regional powers to fully cooperate in order to achieve long-lasting and sustainable peace in Afghanistan;
13. Urges the EU to increase its efforts at dialogue and cooperation with regional partners to combat drug trafficking, money laundering, terrorist financing and human smuggling;
14. Emphasises the fundamental importance of infrastructure and regional development in Afghanistan in improving trade and connectivity between countries of Central and South Asia, and as a stabilising factor in the region;
15. Calls on the EU to include considerations about EU-Afghanistan cooperation in its strategies for Central and South Asia;

Security and peace building

16. Remains deeply concerned by the continuing deterioration of the security situation in Afghanistan and the ongoing territorial gains of the Taliban militants and various terrorist groups such as IS-KP, which seems to be strongly reinforced by the presence of foreign fighters; strongly condemns attacks committed by them against Afghan civilians, security forces, institutions and civil society; reiterates its full commitment to fighting all forms of terrorism and pays tribute to all coalition and Afghan forces and civilians who have paid the ultimate price for a democratic, inclusive, prosperous, secure and stable Afghanistan; notes that more than half of the anti-government attacks in 2018 were attributed to IS-KP, whose aim is to disrupt and derail the reconciliation and peace process; notes with concern that the current jihadist organisations, IS-KP, Al Qaeda and their various subsidiaries, have managed to adapt and take root, representing a major security challenge for Afghanistan, the region and Europe;
17. Emphasises the EU's continued support for the inclusive Afghan-led and Afghan-owned peace and reconciliation process, including the implementation of the peace deal agreed with Hezb-e-Islami; is ready to contribute to this with all appropriate EU instruments as soon as there is a meaningful peace process; calls on the Taliban to denounce violence, join the peace process and accept the Afghan Constitution; underlines its support for the comprehensive peace offer to the Taliban made repeatedly by the government; calls on civil society to be fully involved in those talks; recognises that the question of a long-term combined international security presence needs to be addressed in order to assist the Afghan security forces in stabilising the country and preventing it from becoming once again a safe haven for terrorist groups and a source of regional instability; calls on all parties to the conflict to respect international humanitarian law;

18. Welcomes the first ceasefire period since 2001, Eid al-Fitr, which demonstrated a widespread desire for peace among Afghans; calls on the Taliban to adhere to the calls from the Afghan President for a new ceasefire period;
19. Highlights that four decades of war and conflict, starting with the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in 1979, led to many of the unresolved problems that Afghanistan faces today; in this regard acknowledges the role of young people and the Afghan diaspora in the process of building a more secure and better future for the country; calls on the EU to support transitional justice for the victims of the violence;
20. Notes that following the closure in December 2016 of the Common Security and Defence Policy mission EUPOL Afghanistan, providing specialised training and advice to the Afghan National Police and the Ministry of the Interior, the Union has continued its cooperation with the Afghan police through the EU's external instruments, such as that the Instrument contributing to Stability and Peace (IcSP), which also finances reconciliation actions;
21. Notes that the ISAF mission successfully built the Afghan National Security Forces from scratch into a capable force of 352 000 soldiers and police officers with infantry, military police, intelligence, route clearance, combat support, medical, aviation and logistical capabilities, thereby combatting insurgent influence within the country;
22. Notes that ISAF created a secure environment for improving governance and economic development, which led to the largest percentage gain of any country in basic health and other development indicators; notes that the success of ISAF also led to the emergence of a vibrant media and that millions of Afghans now exercise their right to vote;
23. Further encourages NATO's Resolute Support mission to continue its training and oversight of the Afghan army; encourages the Member States to offer civilian crisis management training to the national and local governments of Afghanistan;
24. Encourages NATO and the EU to work together to gather intelligence on insurgent groups that threaten Afghanistan and jointly coordinate policy recommendations to the Afghan security forces;
25. Regrets deeply that the Taliban and other insurgent groups use the presence of the EU and the international community in Afghanistan, and the developments they have achieved, for propaganda purposes, to promote the narrative that foreign occupiers are impeding on the Afghan country and way of life; encourages the EU and the Afghan Government to counteract such propaganda;
26. Underscores the fact that combating the financing of terrorism is key to creating an environment conducive to security in Afghanistan; urges all relevant partners to enhance their efforts at dismantling all terrorist financing networks, including ending the misuse of hawala networks and international donations for this purpose, in order to fight radicalisation, extremism and the recruitment tools that Afghan terrorist organisations continue to rely upon;
27. Urges the Afghan Government to take all necessary measures to ensure that the prevention and countering of the spread of extremist ideologies be among its top priorities;
28. Supports the Afghanistan Peace and Reintegration Programme, which reintegrates

members of the Taliban who surrender themselves and renounce violence back into society; applauds the UK for already having contributed over GBP 9 million;

29. Calls on the Government of Afghanistan to fully implement the UN Security Council Resolutions on Women, Peace and Security, and to ensure women's participation, protection and rights across the conflict cycle, from conflict prevention to post-conflict reconstruction;
30. Encourages the Afghan Government to develop effective chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear (CBRN) counter-measures; urges the EU to provide operational, technical and financial support for CBRN capacity building;
31. Encourages the Afghan Government to enhance its domestic control systems to counter the widespread circulation of small arms and light weapons (SALW) in line with existing international standards;

State building

32. Stresses the need for the Government of Afghanistan and the international community to step up efforts to stamp out corruption in the country, as well as to strengthen responsive and inclusive institutions and to improve local governance as critical steps in the building of a stable and legitimate state that is able to prevent conflict and insurgency; calls on the Afghan Government to enhance national capacity to recover stolen assets through programmes such as the Stolen Asset Recovery Initiative run by the World Bank Group and the UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC);
33. Calls on the Government of Afghanistan to increase political inclusiveness, strengthen accountability and actively combat corruption;
34. Stresses that the gap between the national and local governments of Afghanistan needs to be bridged; recognises that this problem could potentially be mitigated if the Afghan Government enforced the statute that requires regional governors to be present in the territories they represent;
35. Calls on the EU to ensure that EU funds are invested in projects that help the Afghan population and that adequate support is provided to municipalities in their provision of essential services and in the building of local governance, so as to ensure basic living standards for the population, to ensure coordination between central authorities and local municipalities in order to identify the priorities in which to invest, to enhance support to civil society, notably human rights defenders and, in particular, to prioritise funding for projects that support actors promoting accountability, human rights and democratic principles and that foster locally embedded dialogue and conflict resolution mechanisms;
36. Calls for the EU to continue its phasing-out plan following the closure of the EUPOL mission, which includes ensuring a sustainable transition of activities to EUPOL's local and international partners; urges all parties to continue their efforts to develop the Afghan National Police into a professional force for safety and security, strengthen all law enforcement institutions, with a particular focus on the independence of the judicial system, the police and on improving the state of Afghan prisons, as well as respecting the rights of inmates;
37. Regrets that counter-narcotics campaigns in Afghanistan have been failing and that

insufficient efforts have been made to target Taliban drug labs and international organised criminal networks, which sit at the heart of drug trafficking and provide funding for the Taliban and terrorist operations; supports and endorses the Government of Afghanistan's new counter-narcotics strategy, backed by the UNODC; is concerned by the increase of opium cultivation in Afghanistan¹ and calls on the Government of Afghanistan to put in place targeted policies to reverse this trend; notes that it is critical to generate tangible and sustainable alternatives to poppy production and to make these available to producers;

38. Underlines that the main sources of Taliban income are illegal mining and the production of opium; notes that it is currently estimated that the Taliban brings in revenues of EUR 200-300 million per year from illegal mining activities;
39. Calls for the addition of appropriate checks and balances and increased transparency to ensure the effectiveness of public administration, including financial management, as well as the prevention of any misuse of foreign or development aid, in line with the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness;
40. Welcomes the fact that the EU signed a State Building Contract (SBC) with Afghanistan in 2016, allocating EUR 200 million over two years in budget support in order to strengthen government institutions and increase resources for development priorities such as generating economic growth, reducing poverty and fighting corruption; stresses that resources must be used effectively;
41. Notes that the SBC draws on an overall positive review of the progress made by Afghanistan on key reform areas; recognises the importance of the outlining of the goals that the SBC has put forward and the conditions for funding; further emphasises the importance of oversight and systematic monitoring to prevent misuse; underlines the importance of focus on development and stability by the Afghan Government; calls on the Commission to keep Parliament regularly informed of the implementation of the SBC and emphasises that its findings in this regard should be used to prepare the continuation of the budget support operation for the period 2018-2021;

Civil society and human rights

42. Welcomes the fact that the EU-Afghanistan CAPD emphasises dialogue on human rights issues, in particular the rights of women, children, and ethnic and religious minorities in order to ensure access to resources and support the full exercise of their fundamental rights, including through employing more women in Afghanistan's governmental structures, as well as in the security and judicial systems; calls on Afghanistan to work towards the eradication of all forms of violence and discrimination against women and girls; stresses the need to put more effort into the implementation of the CAPD provisions stated in Titles I and II;
43. Insists that the EU maintain a strong stance on implementing human rights and stresses that democratic principles, human rights, particularly the rights of women and minorities, and the rule of law are essential elements of the Agreement; insists that the EU take specific measures if the Government of Afghanistan violates essential elements

¹ <https://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/frontpage/2018/May/last-years-record-opium-production-in-afghanistan-threatens-sustainable-development--latest-survey-reveals.html>

of the Agreement;

44. Recalls that the EU is particularly focused on improving the conditions of women, children, disabled persons and people living in poverty, and that these groups are in special need of assistance, including in the areas of health and education;
45. Welcomes the very prominent position accorded to gender equality and related policies in the Agreement, and its strong focus on civil society development; calls for the EU to further promote equality between women and men, and women's empowerment, through its development efforts, bearing in mind that changing societal attitudes towards the socio-economic role of women calls for corresponding measures in awareness raising, education and the reform of the regulatory framework;
46. Stresses the need for protection of ethnic and religious minorities which are threatened or under attack; notes that the Shiite Hazara ethnic group is more often targeted than other groups and therefore deserves particular attention;
47. Calls for the strengthening and support of national and sub-national human rights-related institutions in Afghanistan, civil society organisations and academia; urges international counterparts to encourage closer cooperation and engagement with these Afghan partners;
48. Supports the efforts of the ICC to ensure accountability for the war crimes and crimes against humanity allegedly committed since May 2003;
49. Is concerned about the growing number of more violent and deliberate attacks on health facilities and health workers and the targeting of civilian infrastructure; urges all parties to respect their obligations under international human rights law and international humanitarian law, to prevent attacks against civilians and civilian infrastructure;
50. Calls on the Afghan Government to introduce an immediate moratorium on the use of the death penalty as a step towards abolition;

Development and trade

51. Recognises that the end goal of EU aid to Afghanistan is to help the country's government and economy eradicate poverty and develop to a state of independence and growth with internal development and regional cooperation through external trade and sustainable public investment, in order to diminish over-reliance on foreign aid, by contributing to the social, economic and environmental development of Afghanistan;
52. Notes that Afghanistan is one of the world's largest recipients of development aid and that EU institutions committed EUR 3.6 billion in aid to the country between 2002 and 2016; regrets the fact that the proportion of Afghans living in poverty has risen from 38 % (2012) to 55 % (2017) and highlights the fact that the country has registered slow growth since 2014 with the drawdown of international security forces, accompanying reductions in international grants and a deteriorating security situation;
53. Stresses the need to address the high rate of unemployment and fight poverty in order to work towards achieving peace and stability in the country;
54. Emphasises that more job opportunities outside of farming and working for the government are needed in order to prevent young men from being recruited to the

Taliban and other insurgent networks;

55. Welcomes the 2016 Afghanistan National Peace and Development Framework (ANPDF) and the Self-Reliance through Mutual Accountability Framework (SMAF) adopted by the Afghan Government; calls for the EU and its Member States to continue supporting, through the CAPD, Afghan-owned development priorities in line with development effectiveness principles;
56. Calls on the VP/HR and the Commission to evaluate all EU measures in Afghanistan on a regular basis by using explicit qualitative and quantitative indicators, especially with regard to development aid, good governance including the justice sector, respect for human rights and security; calls in this context also for an evaluation of the relative impact of EU measures on the overall situation in the country and the level of coordination and cooperation between EU actors and other international missions and measures, for the findings and recommendations to be published and reported on to Parliament;
57. Regrets the fact that despite significant injections of foreign aid, the impact has been limited; invites the European Court of Auditors to draw up a special report on the effectiveness of EU assistance to Afghanistan over the last decade;
58. Encourages the EU and other international agencies involved in the development of Afghanistan to work with the Afghan media to ensure the strategic communication of development efforts, their sources, purposes and impacts, to the Afghan people;
59. Recalls that there is currently a lack of civilian experts in Afghanistan; encourages the EU and its Member States to employ and properly train civilian experts in key areas crucial to economic development and counter-narcotics to assist and train Afghan officials and locals;
60. Underlines the need to support Afghanistan's system of education to increase the number of children following school classes at all levels;
61. Welcomes the fact that school enrolment has increased tenfold since 2001, with girls making up 39 % of pupils;
62. Urges that particular attention be paid to the young generation and calls for the full use of programmes such as Erasmus+ and Horizon 2020 to establish links between educational institutions, academia, research sectors and small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs);
63. Supports EU and Member State actions contributing to the Afghanistan Reconstruction Trust Fund, which is co-managed by the World Bank and the Ministry of Finance of Afghanistan and works to deliver basic critical services with a specific focus on health and education;
64. Welcomes Afghanistan's accession to the WTO in 2016 and recognises the added value that trade and foreign direct investment will bring to Afghanistan's future; recognises the positive role that WTO membership could have on the integration of Afghanistan into the world economy;
65. Notes that following the country's accession to the WTO in 2016, which increased Afghanistan's ties to the global economy, the EU granted Afghanistan duty free and

quota free access to the EU market, but recognises that further concrete measures are needed in order to allow the private sector to take advantage of this regime and as such increase its internal development;

66. Stresses that Afghan authorities should develop a sustainable economic model with the principle of redistribution at its core; calls on the EU to support Afghanistan in its environmental development and energy transition, since provisions for clean and sustainable energy are essential to accelerate the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals;
67. Underlines that further efforts are need in order to increase the capacity of government institutions to formulate and implement trade strategies and policies, improve cross-border movement of goods and enhance the quality of products to meet international standards;
68. Calls for the enhancement of business-to-business relations between EU-based companies and the Afghan private sector; encourages the implementation of favourable conditions for SME development;
69. Supports and welcomes any development programme launched by the EU, an individual Member State or any member of the international community, which has as its goal assisting small business owners and entrepreneurs in navigating legal costs, regulations, and other barriers to production that would otherwise act to discourage businesses from entering the market and/or growing within the market;
70. Recognises that mineral reserves in Afghanistan provide an economic opportunity for the country to generate revenue and jobs; notes that China has shown interest in these mineral reserves, with a particular emphasis on rare earth elements;

Migration

71. Recognises that migration is an ongoing challenge for Afghanistan which presents issues for neighbouring countries and EU Member States; is concerned about the unprecedented numbers of returning migrants mainly from Pakistan and Iran, and to a lesser extent from Europe; recognises that issues relating to internally displaced persons and refugees are a result of the threat of violence from insurgent groups in Afghanistan, as well as economic and environmental factors; stresses that efforts by the EU and the international community should be focused on preventing the root causes of mass migration; welcomes the Afghan national return management strategy; is concerned, however, about the lack of standing integration policies of the Afghan authorities to manage the present returnees; is convinced that proper reintegration of returnees, especially of children, who must be guaranteed access to primary and secondary education, is crucial to ensure stability in the country and that people who have returned have not been subject to violence or coercion during return procedures;
72. Underlines the fact that according to the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), 5.5 million people are in need of humanitarian aid in Afghanistan, including internally displaced people following conflict or drought, and emphasises that drought has led to the forced displacement of more than 250 000 people in the north and west of the country; notes that the Humanitarian Response Plan is only 33.5 % funded and urges the EU and its Member States, therefore, to step up their endeavours to address key humanitarian challenges and human needs and to pay

particular attention to vulnerable people, including those located in areas that are hard to reach;

73. Regrets the fact that in spite of Article 28(4) of the CAPD, which states that the Parties should conclude a readmission agreement, no formal agreement has been achieved, but an informal one – the Joint Way Forward; deems it important that any agreements regarding readmission should be formalised in order to ensure democratic accountability; regrets the lack of parliamentary oversight and democratic control on the conclusion of the Joint Way Forward and stresses the importance of conducting continuous dialogue with the relevant actors in order to find a sustainable solution to the regional dimension of the issue of Afghan refugees;
74. Regrets the migration wave from Afghanistan to the West, especially of the educated and the young, due to the lack of prospects in the country; underlines the EU assistance to improve Afghan emigrants' lives disbursed in Pakistan and Iran; calls on those countries not to expel those persons, which could have a deeply negative effect on the stability and economy of Afghanistan; urges that the return of refugees to their homes be organised in a safe, orderly and voluntary manner;
75. Applauds the Commission for establishing a major project in 2016 to better reintegrate returning migrants into Afghanistan, Bangladesh, and Pakistan with EUR 72 million earmarked specifically for Afghanistan between 2016 and 2020;
76. Emphasises that EU development assistance to Afghanistan should not be seen exclusively through the prism of migration and the objectives of border management, and considers that development aid should address the root causes of migration effectively;

Sectoral cooperation

77. Urges the Commission to present comprehensive strategies for each sector with the aim of ensuring widespread development in all areas of cooperation with Afghanistan;
78. Calls for efforts to put the EU's experience in capacity building and public administration and civil service reform to good use; highlights the urgent need to improve governance in the field of taxation; calls for support for civil society organisations, in full respect of their different ethnic, religious, social or political background;
79. Underlines the fact that agriculture provides 50 % of the income of Afghanistan's population and a quarter of its GDP; notes that the EU is committed to spending EUR 1.4 billion 2014 and 2020 on developmental projects in rural areas; further notes that these projects are crucial to ensuring that farmers do not move towards the black economy;
80. Notes that 80 % of the Afghan population engages in subsistence agriculture in an environment hostile to agriculture, with poor irrigation methods; supports enhancing efforts to ensure food security;
81. Notes with concern the current drought in Afghanistan, which is the worst in decades and threatens people, livestock and agriculture; is further concerned about frequent natural disasters such as flash floods, earthquakes, landslides and harsh winters;

82. Notes with concern that harm to agricultural products such as wheat can lead to displacement, poverty, starvation, and in some cases movements to the black market, and that three million people are at extremely high risk of food security and loss of livelihood;
83. Recognises that moving more of the value chain of food processing back into Afghanistan could increase income for families, increase food security, decrease food costs and provide more employment opportunities;
84. Encourages the EU to continue its efforts at improving healthcare in Afghanistan and stresses the importance of vaccination for all people, but especially those who are particularly vulnerable to illness, such as children;
85. Welcomes the fact that primary access to healthcare has increased from 9 % to more than 57 %, that life expectancy has increased from 44 to 60 and that these improvements were made possible by contributions from the EU, individual Member States and the international community; recognises, in the light of these achievements, that still more needs to be done to continue to raise the life expectancy and lower the mortality rate of women giving birth, as well as of newly born children;
86. Strongly condemns the corrupt practices in the Afghan healthcare system, such as the importation of illegal pharmaceuticals, and urges the EU to continue to apply pressure on the Afghan Government to do more to prevent such corrupt practices;
87. Reiterates the need for trained medical professionals within Afghanistan and encourages the EU and its Member States to continue to bring in medical professionals to train local doctors and medics;
88. Notes that human trafficking and migrant smuggling causes harm on all sides, particularly to Afghan society; calls for the swift implementation of existing agreements, including on exchange of information, in order to dismantle the transnational criminal networks which benefit from instability and weak institutions;

Implementation of the CAPD

89. Welcomes the CAPD as the first contractual relationship between the EU and Afghanistan;
90. Notes that the CAPD provides the basis for developing relationships in various areas such as the rule of law, health, rural development, education, science and technology, anti-corruption, money laundering, the financing of terrorism, organised crime and narcotics, migration, nuclear security, WMD non-proliferation and climate change;
91. Welcomes the establishment of the joint cooperation bodies at executive level, with an emphasis on holding regular dialogues on political issues including human rights, in particular the rights of women and children, which are essential elements of this agreement, and addressing challenges and creating opportunities for a stronger partnership;
92. Expresses concern that the CAPD lacks provisions on joint parliamentary scrutiny of its implementation; promotes the role of the European Parliament, the parliaments of the Member States and the Afghan Parliament in monitoring the implementation of the CAPD;

93. Takes note of the replacement of the EU Special Representative for Afghanistan by a Special Envoy as of September 2017, streamlined within the EEAS structure;
94. Regrets that the Council proceeded with a decision on provisional application in areas which are subject to Parliament's consent, notably the chapter on cooperation in trade and investment matters, which fall within the exclusive competences of the EU, rather than requesting ratification early in the process, prior to taking this step; considers that this decision runs counter to the principle of sincere cooperation enshrined in Article 4(3) of the TEU and undermines Parliament's legal rights and responsibilities;

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95. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission, the VP/HR, the EU Special Envoy for Afghanistan, the governments and parliaments of the Member States, and the Government and Parliament of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan.