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Committee on Development

2008/2236(INI)

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DRAFT OPINION

of the Committee on Development

for the Committee on Foreign Affairs

on the review of the "European Neighbourhood Policy Instrument"
(2008/2236(INI))

Rapporteur: Danutė Budreikaitė

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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. Stresses the fact that all but two of the seventeen countries covered by the European Neighbourhood Policy Instrument (ENPI) are classified as developing countries by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development's Development Assistance Committee; notes, in this context, that although the ENPI entails the promotion of poverty reduction, it has not effectively contributed to a steep drop-off in poverty rates and improving the socio-economic situation in many ENP countries; insists therefore that the eradication of poverty and the achievement of the UN Millennium Development Goals (especially on health and education) become the primary and overarching objectives throughout the implementation of the ENPI assistance;
2. Notes that the overarching focus in ENPI programming is put on economic development and trade facilitation and liberalisation; calls for prioritising in the ENPI programming the development areas of cooperation outlined in the instrument such as promotion of democratisation and human rights, gender equality and non-discrimination, social development and protection, health and education and environmental protection;
3. Is worried that the ENP states are among the most affected by shortcomings in terms of democratisation and persistent breaches of human rights; is concerned also that civil society and opposition parties were not systematically and meaningfully involved in the ENP consultation process and programming of ENPI funds due to constraints posed by the ruling elites; urges the Commission to provide resources for democratic reforms that promote the strengthening of opposition parties, overcoming flaws of electoral procedures and guaranteeing judicial independence in the ENP countries as well as to enforce human rights under the ENPI;
4. Notes that despite efforts in some ENP countries to promote gender equality and to enhance women's participation in political, social and economic life, such measures have not yet led to any significant improvement in the Mediterranean Neighbourhood as well as in some Eastern Neighbourhood countries; calls on the Commission to address more systematically gender inequalities in the programming and implementation of ENPI.