

Friday 19 December 1997

PART II

Texts adopted by the European Parliament

1. Human rights and democratic principles

(a) A4-0381/97

Resolution on the Commission report on the implementation of measures intended to promote observance of human rights and democratic principles (for 1995) (COM(96)0672 – C4-0095/97)*The European Parliament,*

- having regard to the Commission report, COM(96)0672 – C4-0095/97,
 - having regard to Articles C and J.1(2) of the Treaty on European Union and Articles 130u, 228 and 238 of the EC Treaty.
 - having regard to its previous resolutions, in particular its resolution of 12 December 1996 on human rights in the world in 1995-1996 and the Union's human rights policy (1).
 - having regard to the report of the Committee on Foreign Affairs, Security and Defence Policy and the opinions of the Committee on Development and Cooperation, the Committee on Civil Liberties and Internal Affairs and the Committee on Budgets (A4-0381/97).
- A. whereas Parliament, the Commission and the Council share the objective of constantly improving the effectiveness of the EU's external activities and policies for the promotion of human rights and democratic principles, which must be based where possible on positive measures,
- B. whereas the EU is a major international source of funding for such initiatives,
- C. whereas Parliament has created a specific budget chapter on democratization and human rights, with the objective of achieving greater efficiency, effectiveness and visibility in the EU's activities in this field; whereas this budget chapter has been reformulated within the 1998 budget procedure in order to ensure a more coherent and consistent approach in EU policy and to increase transparency in its implementation,
- D. whereas close parliamentary scrutiny and control of human rights expenditure is essential.
- E. whereas the closest possible cooperation and coordination between Parliament, the Council and the Commission is crucial if endeavours on behalf of human rights are to be successful,

Institutional cooperation for the promotion of human rights

1. Welcomes the Commission's report as a further contribution to the continuing effort to enhance the effectiveness and transparency of EU^t activities in favour of human rights and democratization;

(1) OJ C 20, 20.1.1997, p. 161.

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2. Acknowledges the important work by the Inter-Service Group in coordinating human rights activities by different Commission DGs, and calls for further efforts to overcome the negative effects of the geographical compartmentalisation which exists within the Commission;
3. Notes that within the budget procedure for 1998 an interinstitutional working party on democracy and protection of human rights, comprising representatives of Parliament and of the Commission, has been created; recalls that this working party is to give its opinion on the current annual work programme;
4. Calls for the relevant Commission departments to be strengthened through redeployment and enhanced training, and, in the framework of the budgetary decisions, through an increase in staff numbers where there is a clear justification for this;
5. Urges that the ability to adjust priorities quickly in crisis situations should be enhanced;
6. Requests the Commission to establish and enforce clear guidelines for the acknowledgement and publication of EU subsidies in this area, in order to raise the profile of EU support for the promotion of human rights;
7. Requests the Commission to report promptly to Parliament any instances of third country governments objecting to or blocking human rights or democratization projects; it should also draw up proposals for dealing with such objections, with a view to overcoming the obstacles that unwilling governments can put in the way of human rights project funding;
8. Calls on the Commission to grasp the opportunity provided by new electronic media to make information on human rights available throughout the world, and to ensure that material from seminars funded by the EU is made available electronically, in order to encourage its wider distribution and to guide the work of related seminars in future;
9. Calls on the Commission to publish annually a communication on compliance, by third countries with which the Community has concluded agreements, with the human rights and democracy clause contained therein;
10. Requests the Commission, in drawing up its reports on respect for human rights, to be guided by the information supplied by international bodies and/or institutions charged with the task of monitoring respect for human rights;

Electoral support and monitoring

11. Points out that it has decided, within the budget procedure for 1998, that the financial implementation of the support for, and supervision of, electoral processes (B7-709) will depend on the prior adoption by the three institutions of common rules and procedures for their representation during the special missions for electoral monitoring and/or post-electoral measures; notes that the consolidation of the budgetary resources used to finance operations related to elections in third countries will depend on this harmonisation and will be decided within the annual budget procedure;
12. Calls for a communication from the Commission evaluating EU participation in election monitoring missions in recent years, with a view to enhancing the EU's capacity to promote democracy through electoral support operations;
13. Points out that whenever additional ad hoc funding is needed for election observation and support operations the Commission should propose in due time to the budget authority, in accordance with the Financial Regulation, the corresponding transfer from other budget lines, if necessary from those concerning the countries in question, to budget line B7-709;
14. Insists that a specific line should be created for election observation and support operations, distinct from the human rights and democratization lines;

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• *Future reports on human rights expenditure*

15. Calls on the Commission to ensure that future reports include an assessment of the effectiveness of funded projects, and to make assessments carried out by external consultants available to Parliament;
16. Calls on the Commission to clarify the respective roles of the report under consideration and the reports adopted pursuant to the November 1991 Council resolution on human rights, democracy and development;
17. Calls on the Commission to draw up and publish its criteria for assessing the success or failure of funded projects;
18. Recommends that consultant studies of the impact of development assistance projects should also examine to extent to which they have furthered respect for human rights and democratic principles, in view of the stipulation in the Treaty on European Union that the promotion of human rights is an objective of development cooperation;
19. Calls on the Commission to address the following issues in future reports:
 - the effectiveness of operations undertaken by organizations specifically named in human rights budget lines;
 - the ratio of administrative to operational expenditure in the grants given under Chapter B7-70;
 - the extent to which projects were co-funded through other sources, in order to allow closer scrutiny of the benefits and shortcomings of cooperation with other actors;
 - the breakdown of funding between official or government activities, semi-state activities, and non-governmental initiatives, and to seek to achieve a proper balance between government-run and non-governmental projects;
 - the compilation of comparative figures on expenditure on democratisation by EU Member States, other states such as the US, and other international organisations;

Procedures

20. Calls on the Commission to take steps to reduce undue delays in the disbursement of grants, particularly in view of disturbing reports of excessive delays in their allocation, apparently due to overly bureaucratic procedures;
21. Recommends that information about grants be made readily available, also to smaller organizations and to organizations not based in Brussels or indeed in the EU, for instance by providing such information on the Internet, and that information on the status of an application be regularly provided to applicants;
22. Reiterates that the inclusion of the democracy clause in economic cooperation agreements between the European Union and third countries is an essential element in promoting human rights and democratic principles;
23. Recommends that, in cases where the EU has put its official relations with third countries on ice due to serious shortcomings in the area of human rights, direct support for forces in civil society working towards the country's democratization be continued, with account being taken also of special solutions appropriate to the specific problems involved;

In conclusion

24. Reiterates its call for a thorough impact assessment at political level of human rights activities, and for reports on the human rights situation in third countries to be forwarded regularly to Parliament;
25. Believes that a major evaluation conference could be held annually on the EU's democratization programmes throughout the world, along the lines of the October 1997 conference on the PHARE and TACIS democracy programmes;

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- 26. Expresses its support in principle for higher levels of expenditure to be made available for the promotion of human rights, provided that a more developed system of human rights reporting is established in the EU framework, which should include annual reports by each Commission Delegation identifying whether the situation regarding human rights and democracy in each partner country has improved;

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- 27. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Commission, the Council and the governments and parliaments of the Member States.

(b) A4-0393/97

Resolution on setting up a single coordinating structure within the Commission responsible for human rights and democratization

The European Parliament,

- having regard to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights,
- having regard to the principles of the European Convention on Human Rights,
- having regard to the CSCE Charter adopted in Paris in 1990,
- having regard to Article 130u(2) of the EC Treaty,
- having regard to the resolution of the Council and the representatives of the Member States meeting within the Council of 28 November 1991 on human rights, democracy and development,
- having regard to the results of the UN human rights conference in Vienna in June 1993, and of the UN conferences in Cairo, Copenhagen and Beijing,
- having regard to its resolutions on human rights throughout the world, particularly the resolution of 12 December 1996 on human rights throughout the world in 1995/96 and the Union's human rights policy ⁽¹⁾,
- having regard to its resolution of 21 April 1994 on human rights in the European Union's foreign policy ⁽²⁾,
- having regard to its resolution of 12 June 1997 on progress in implementing the common foreign and security policy (January to December 1996) ⁽³⁾,
- having regard to the Commission communication to the Council and Parliament: 'The European Union and the external dimension of human rights policy: from Rome to Maastricht and beyond', COM(95)0567,
- having regard to the Commission report on the implementation of measures intended to promote human rights and democratic principles (for 1995), COM(96)0672,
- having regard to the Commission report on cooperation with European non-governmental development organizations (NGDOs) in those fields of importance to developing countries (1994 financial year), COM(96)0032,
- having regard to its resolution of 20 September 1996 on the communication from the Commission on the inclusion of respect for democratic principles and human rights in agreements between the Community and third countries ⁽⁴⁾.

⁽¹⁾ OJ C 20, 20.1.1997, p. 161.

⁽²⁾ OJ C 128, 9.5.1994, p. 370.

⁽³⁾ OJ C 200, 30.6.1997, p. 148.

⁽⁴⁾ OJ C 320, 28.10.1996, p. 261.