



23.5.2018

OPINION

of the Committee on Development

for the Committee on Foreign Affairs

on the Partnership and Cooperation Agreement between the EU and Iraq
(2010/0310M(NLE))

Rapporteur for opinion: Paavo Väyrynen

SUGGESTIONS

The Committee on Development calls on the Committee on Foreign Affairs, as the committee responsible, to incorporate the following suggestions into its motion for a resolution:

1. Welcomes the EU's commitment to providing longer term support to the country and the fact that it has identified Iraq as a pilot country in which to better address and operationalise the humanitarian-development nexus in order to foster a transition from humanitarian assistance to longer term reconstruction and stabilisation; recalls that the Iraq crisis is a UN level 3 emergency and that 11 million people are currently in need of assistance; urges, therefore, the EU and its Member States, to enhance first of all their efforts to urgently address key humanitarian challenges and human needs, in particular regarding the more than 3 million internally displaced persons (IDPs);
2. Urges the EU to remain committed to emergency assistance in the country, bearing in mind that there are more than 3 million internally displaced persons in the country, of whom more than 1.6 million are living in appalling hygienic and sanitary conditions; stresses also that about half of the IDPs are minors and that, of these, 600 000 have not received any form of education;
3. Stresses that poverty is widespread in the country and that in spite of being an upper-middle income country, years of violence, conflict and sectarianism have considerably undermined progress in development; calls for the EU to focus its development assistance, through targeted projects, on the most vulnerable groups and the people most in need, namely women and children, young people, IDPs and refugees;
4. Stresses that the rule of law, human rights and access to justice remain important challenges and that Iraq is among the lowest ranking countries on the transparency index; insists that the EU give priority to the implementation of political and economic reforms aimed at building institutional capacity and consolidating democracy;
5. Insists that sustainable and inclusive growth should be supported according to Iraqi national development priorities;
6. Notes that social and political processes and dynamics in Iraq are highly male-dominated and affected by the excessive influence of religious leaders; deplores that this often results in the exclusion of women and secular groups from social interactions;
7. Believes that, during the transition from emergency assistance to development, a long-term approach, stabilisation, reforms and improvements in the areas of good governance and accountability, education and skills development, access to livelihood opportunities and provision of health and basic social services are priority areas for development assistance; stresses also the importance of reforms to improve the gender balance and the representation of women in the country's political life; looks forward to receiving concrete proposals on envisaged actions that respond to those needs and urges the Commission to provide evidence of the results and impacts achieved within the framework of the multiannual indicative programme 2014-2017;
8. Stresses the need to support Iraq in moving towards a sustainable diversification of the economy to reduce reliance on exploitation and exports of raw materials such as crude

oil, which accounted for 46.8 % of the country's exports in 2016;

9. Stresses that the deterioration of the environment and infrastructure, successive droughts and desertification have had a major impact on rural populations and increased food insecurity and water shortages, in particular for displaced people; calls for the EU to work closely with the Iraqi authorities to move towards a more efficient and equitable use and management of natural resources;
10. Is concerned about the high drop-out rate among students of both sexes from Iraqi schools (as denounced by civil society organisations, according to which 60 % of those who had enrolled in primary schools in 2015 have since dropped out); highlights that high levels of literacy are key to building positive peace in conflict-affected contexts;
11. Calls on the EU to provide educational programmes on peace and the prevention of violent extremism (PVE) and disarmament campaigns to stop the proliferation of small arms and light weapons in Iraq;
12. Stresses the importance of raising individual awareness of human rights in order to encourage inter-community harmony and to discourage militias from recruiting young people, who are vulnerable to violence or extremism;
13. Underlines the need for extensive expertise in issues related to media and freedom of expression when training local media actors in peace journalism;
14. Insists that the provision of humanitarian aid and development assistance must be needs-based and non-partisan in order to support an effective stabilisation and reconstruction process, including the safe return of religious minorities and ethnic groups to their homes; stresses that external actors, including the EU, must actively mitigate the risk of assistance being instrumentalised by domestic political actors or allocated in a way that discriminates against or privileges specific groups;
15. Calls for the EU to ensure that EU funds are invested in projects that help the Iraqi population and that adequate support is provided to municipalities in their provision of essential services and in building local governance, so as to guarantee basic living standards for the population; calls, furthermore, for the EU to ensure coordination between central authorities and local municipalities in order to identify the priorities to invest in and to enhance support to civil society, notably human rights defenders; calls, in particular, for priority to be given to funding for projects that support actors promoting accountability and democratic change, and that foster locally embedded dialogue and conflict-resolution mechanisms, involving young people in particular;
16. Expresses deep concern about the fact that corruption in Iraq is widespread and occurs at multiple levels, and that it appears that there is no clear strategy for tackling it;
17. Stresses that there is a perceived lack of justice and the existence of double standards within the Iraqi judicial system; notes that Iraqi judicial institutions do not appear to be taking the necessary actions to prosecute human rights violators and other criminals;
18. Notes that security sector reform in Iraq is an important challenge that should be supported by the UN and the EU; stresses the need to work towards the demobilisation

of militias and the reintegration of fighters as part of security sector reform;

19. Calls on the EU to provide enhanced technical assistance to the Iraqi authorities for sound natural resource management, improved tax collection and the reduction of illicit financial flows, with the aim of ensuring that Iraq will be able to finance its development domestically in the medium term and reduce inequality among its population and its regions; stresses the need to actively advise the private sector and investors with a view to enhancing both conflict sensitivity and their contribution to peacebuilding and sustainable development;
20. Calls for the EU to invest in the recovery and development of the local economy, notably by increasing its support to entrepreneurship, SMEs and vocational training, promoting investment in priority areas such as energy and agriculture, and encouraging public-private partnerships; believes that creating a positive environment with incentives for the development of the private sector will not only allow youth unemployment in the country to be tackled, but will also help create opportunities for the post-conflict return of IDPs and refugees;
21. Recalls that women and girls are disproportionately affected by conflict and extremism, and that they are more vulnerable to violence and abuses, including sexual violence, torture, human trafficking, slavery and child marriage; stresses the need to address the specific humanitarian and development needs of women and girls, particularly in displaced communities; calls on the EU to further promote equality between women and men and women's empowerment through its development efforts and to emphasise the role of women in recovery and peacebuilding in the country;
22. Calls on the EU to strengthen engagement with Iraqi civil society actors; stresses that a gender-sensitive approach to the stabilisation and reconstruction process is necessary in order to include women effectively;
23. Underlines that the fight against terrorism must not be limited to repressive actions, but be consistent with the fulfilment of human rights and international law in order to avoid further or renewed radicalisation; calls on political, development, security and other social actors, to thoroughly analyse and address the drivers for radicalisation, violent extremism and terrorist recruitment in a coherent manner;
24. Encourages the engagement of civil society organisations (CSOs) in the disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration processes in Iraq;
25. Calls on the EU to implement programmes enabling people to participate in local decision-making processes and to reinforce the transparency and accountability of institutions;
26. Highlights the need to invest in Iraqi agriculture in view of its high employment potential and the importance of repopulating rural areas where the population is in constant decline due to the conflicts.

PROCEDURE – COMMITTEE ASKED FOR OPINION

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| Title | Partnership and Cooperation Agreement between the EU and Iraq |
| References | 2010/0310M(NLE) |
| Committee responsible | AFET |
| Rapporteur Date appointed | Paavo Väyrynen 12.4.2018 |
| Discussed in committee | 24.4.2018 |
| Date adopted | 16.5.2018 |
| Result of final vote | +: 21 -: 2 0: 0 |
| Members present for the final vote | Beatriz Becerra Basterrechea, Ignazio Corrao, Mireille D'Ornano, Doru-Claudian Frunzuliță, Charles Goerens, Maria Heubuch, Teresa Jiménez-Becerril Barrio, Stelios Kouloglou, Arne Lietz, Linda McAvan, Norbert Neuser, Cristian Dan Preda, Lola Sánchez Caldentey, Jean-Luc Schaffhauser, Elly Schlein, Paavo Väyrynen, Bogdan Brunon Wenta, Anna Záborská, Joachim Zeller, Željana Žovko |
| Substitutes present for the final vote | Cécile Kashetu Kyenge, Juan Fernando López Aguilar |

FINAL VOTE BY ROLL CALL IN COMMITTEE ASKED FOR OPINION

| 21 | + |
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| ALDE | Beatriz Becerra Basterrechea, Charles Goerens, Paavo Väyrynen |
| EFDD | Ignazio Corrao, Mireille D'Ornano |
| ENF | Jean-Luc Schaffhauser |
| PPE | Andor Deli, Teresa Jiménez-Becerril Barrio, Cristian Dan Preda, Bogdan Brunon Wenta, Anna Záborská, Joachim Zeller, Željana Zovko |
| S&D | Doru-Claudian Frunzuliță, Cécile Kshetu Kyenge, Arne Lietz, Juan Fernando López Aguilar, Linda McAvan, Norbert Neuser, Elly Schlein |
| VERTS/ALE | Maria Heubuch |

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| GUE/NGL | Stelios Kouloglou, Lola Sánchez Caldentey |

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Key to symbols:

+ : in favour

- : against

0 : abstention