



Procedure file

Basic information		
INI - Own-initiative procedure	2005/2141(INI)	Procedure completed
Aid effectiveness and corruption in developing countries		
Subject 6.30 Development cooperation		

Key players			
European Parliament	Committee responsible	Rapporteur	Appointed
	DEVE Development		24/05/2005
		PSE VAN DEN BERG Margrietus	
	Committee for opinion	Rapporteur for opinion	Appointed
	INTA International Trade	The committee decided not to give an opinion.	
European Commission	Commission DG Development	Commissioner	

Key events			
08/09/2005	Committee referral announced in Parliament		
20/02/2006	Vote in committee		Summary
28/02/2006	Committee report tabled for plenary	A6-0048/2006	
06/04/2006	Results of vote in Parliament		
06/04/2006	Debate in Parliament		
06/04/2006	Decision by Parliament	T6-0141/2006	Summary
06/04/2006	End of procedure in Parliament		

Technical information	
Procedure reference	2005/2141(INI)
Procedure type	INI - Own-initiative procedure
Procedure subtype	Initiative
Legal basis	Rules of Procedure EP 54
Stage reached in procedure	Procedure completed

Documentation gateway

Amendments tabled in committee	PE369.874	06/02/2006	EP	
Committee report tabled for plenary, single reading	A6-0048/2006	28/02/2006	EP	
Text adopted by Parliament, single reading	T6-0141/2006	06/04/2006	EP	Summary
Commission response to text adopted in plenary	SP(2006)2095	11/05/2006	EC	
Commission response to text adopted in plenary	SP(2006)2311/2	30/06/2006	EC	

Aid effectiveness and corruption in developing countries

The committee adopted the own-initiative report by Margrietus van den BERG (PES, NL) on aid effectiveness and corruption in developing countries. MEPs pointed out that corruption hurts the poor disproportionately, restricting their access to public goods and lowering the quality of basic services. Many actors - including politicians, government officials, civil society, the media, multinationals and international donors - had a role to play in the fight against corruption. The report called on all the EU Member States to ratify the 1997 OECD Convention on the Bribery of Public Officials and the 2003 UN Convention against Corruption. And it urged the Commission and the Member States to establish "an international system of blacklisting to prevent banks from lending large sums of money to corrupt regimes or individuals representing a government".

MEPs asked the Commission, when designing its development programmes, to focus more specifically on issues of accountability and transparency. They stressed the need to support national parliaments in developing countries in their work as budget authorities by means of dialogue, information-sharing and capacity-building. The EU should also give greater support to projects assisting or strengthening a free and independent media in partner countries. The report stressed the need for the establishment of watchdogs by civil society in developing countries, involving a system of checks and balances of their governments, and called on the Commission to support this process by reserving an appropriate percentage of budget aid for civil society watchdogs.

Other recommendations included: more transparency in EU budget aid programmes, with the publication of information on the aid spent in each recipient country; the earmarking of budget aid for a specific sector; and the provision of technical and financial support for regional initiatives such as the African Peer Review Mechanism. Lastly, MEPs called on Member States with major financial centres on their territory to take legal and administrative measures to ensure that funds acquired illegally are repatriated to the country of origin.

Aid effectiveness and corruption in developing countries

The European Parliament adopted a resolution based on the own-initiative report drafted by Margrietus van den BERG (PES, NL) on aid effectiveness and corruption in developing countries. (Please see the report of 20/02/2006.) It pointed to World Bank estimates that more than USD 1 000 000 million is paid in bribes every year throughout the world and the African Union estimates that corruption costs African economies more than 25% of Africa's GDP annually. Parliament called on the Commission to focus more specifically, in designing its development programmes, on issues of accountability and transparency, saying weak accountability mechanisms tend to facilitate corruption.

Parliament underlined the following:

- the need to support national parliaments in developing countries in their work as budget authorities by means of dialogue, information-sharing and capacity-building;
- the important role that a free and independent media can play in the fight against corruption. There should be greater EU support for projects assisting or strengthening such media in partner countries;
- the need to contribute to strengthening the legal system in those countries;
- the important role played by women also in the fight against corruption and the need for better education of women and girls;
- the importance of investment in the developing countries;
- the importance of the establishment of watchdogs by civil society in developing countries, requiring a system of checks and balances of their government; the Commission should reserve an appropriate percentage of budget aid for civil society watchdogs;
- the need for capacity-building in central and local institutions to combat corruption, especially in the light of the increase in aid given in the form of budget aid;
- the granting of budget aid must always be carefully preceded by fiduciary risk assessments on a case-by-case basis;
- budget aid should always be earmarked for a specific sector;
- there are major corruption risks involved in public procurement procedures and, consequently, transparent procurement rules and procedures should be promoted as a key priority.

Parliament called for more transparency in programmes for budget aid granted by the EU, including publication of the relevant information about the aid spent in the recipient country, and by involving parliaments and informing civil players in this process. The EU, as co-chair of the Public Expenditure and Financial Accountability Programme (PEFA), which provides a harmonized framework for assessing fiduciary risk in recipient countries, should include specific indicators to measure the level of corruption.

Parliament made several other recommendations, inter alia:

- Member States should promote a legally binding international instrument on the tracing and the marking of SALW and ammunition as soon as possible, and support regional initiatives to combat the illicit trade in SALW and their ammunition in the developing countries;
- there should be further enforcement of to the "Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative" in order to ensure the disclosure of information about payments between governments of developing countries and multinationals;
- Member States with financial centres must take all necessary legal and administrative action to ensure that illicitly acquired funds can be repatriated to the State of origin;
- the Commission and the Member States should establish an international system of blacklisting to prevent banks from lending large sums of money to corrupt regimes or individuals representing a government;

Finally, Parliament called upon the Commission and the Member States to ban public purchasing or procurement contracts with companies whose employees have been involved in corrupt activities with government ministers or officials or in any other way within a developing country, if those employees are not subject to disciplinary proceedings. Member States must refer such cases to the appropriate prosecution authorities.