Parliamentary Assembly
Assemblée parlementaire
http://assembly.coe.int
1949.2019
COUNCIL OF EUROPE
CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

Resolution 2268 (2019)[1]

Development co-operation: a tool for preventing migration crises

Parliamentary Assembly

1. The 21st century has brought with it even greater challenges for developing countries, in particular those of the African continent, related to rising population levels, climate change and political instability, coupled with problems of poor infrastructure and exacerbated by the digital divide. One consequence of these phenomena has been the large-scale displacement of populations, both within the continent and towards Europe.

2. European countries have always shown great support for underdeveloped regions, motivated by humanitarian concerns but also by their recognition that the indispensable markets for goods and reservoirs of natural resources they represent require stable societies and a certain standard of living to be operational. Economic and cultural ties with former colonies and protectorates often help favour preferences. Development funding has steadily increased in recent years, as recorded by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD).

3. The work of international organisations, principally the United Nations, has done much to change the attitudes of donors and beneficiaries, by transforming the notion of aid into multi-sectoral approaches involving real co-operation for development. In addition, poverty eradication is at the core of the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which declares that the whole world should be put on a more prosperous and sustainable development path. By adopting the agenda, member States have undertaken to co-operate to ensure safe, orderly and regular (legal) migration as a means of strengthening the resilience of host communities, particularly in developing countries. Goal 10 of the agenda aims to "reduce inequality within and among countries".

4. Development co-operation has a two-fold role in relation to migration in Africa: firstly in empowering the more stable countries to manage the arrival, reception and integration of migrants from conflict or poverty-affected neighbouring countries and, secondly, in providing hope for a viable future at home for people who would otherwise migrate to Europe. In the longer term, investment in education, health and social and cultural community-building are also contributing to a measure of demographic regulation, in particular by providing women with alternative choices to their traditional domestic roles.

5. The European Union's development policies, based on the United Nations goals, make the European Union and its member States providers of 50% of the world's development aid. The recent reinforcement of security and border control measures and the financial support given to countries to manage migration should not mean a corresponding reduction in funding for governance and local communities or detract from budget for sustainable development programmes.

1. *Text adopted by the Standing Committee*, acting on behalf of the Assembly, on 1 March 2019 (see Doc. 14830, report of the Committee on Migration, Refugees and Displaced Persons, rapporteur: Mr Pierre-Alain Fridez).

6. Given the importance of development co-operation for migration, the Parliamentary Assembly calls on member States to:

6.1. at international level:

6.1.1. work together to fulfil the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, and in particular Goal 10 “Reduce inequality within and among countries”, as well as Target 10.7 “Facilitate orderly, safe, regular and responsible migration and mobility of people, including through the implementation of planned and well-managed migration policies”;

6.1.2. for those countries having signed the United Nations Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration, contribute to its implementation, and in this context in particular Objectives 18, 19 and 20 on skills development, conditions that allow migrants and diasporas to fully contribute to sustainable development in all countries, and the faster, safer and cheaper transfer of remittances;

6.1.3. use the tools and programmes of international organisations such as the United Nations, the OECD and the European Union to better co-ordinate their development co-operation, evaluate needs and assess implementation;

6.2. at national level:

6.2.1. continue and step up their development co-operation and diversify funding, putting emphasis on sustainable programmes for education, health services and infrastructure, with the understanding that they can only produce tangible results in the long term;

6.2.2. not apply conditions to development co-operation such as returns on investment, access to markets and resources or migration management, or the equivalent of “gag rules” which eliminate some forms of assistance on ideological grounds, especially with respect to women’s health care and reproductive rights;

6.2.3. invest in particular in education as a means of increasing the skills, resilience, employability and capacity for innovative adaptation of young people and future generations, and of helping them to understand and respond to today’s global challenges;

6.2.4. use historic and linguistic links with developing countries to facilitate co-operation, while taking into account that some regions of the world, such as the Sahel, are neglected as they do not have strong ties with Europe or any particular economic interest;

6.2.5. stand ready to react swiftly to situations of extreme poverty resulting from conflict or drought, and ensure that development programmes are tailored to the regions and communities for which they are destined and take their concerns into account, using the international checklists for development devised by the United Nations and the OECD;

6.3. at regional and civil society levels:

6.3.1. understand the importance of small-scale projects tailored to immediate, specific needs and consequently foster civil society initiatives, partnerships and physical exchanges which benefit all parties socially and culturally and provide capacity-building opportunities;

6.3.2. implement policies which encourage and support civil society bodies and private initiatives to co-operate with developing countries, including tax-reduction measures, facilitating remittances and fostering relations of diaspora communities with their countries of origin.

7. In addition, the Assembly calls on all member States to invest globally in efforts to contain climate change which, it is estimated, will force 50 million people to leave their homes in African countries by 2050.