



Resolution 1975 (2014)¹

Final version

Stepping up action against global inequalities: Europe's contribution to the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) process

Parliamentary Assembly

1. In 2015, the target date for the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), agreed upon by the United Nations in the final declaration of the Millennium Summit in September 2000, will be reached. Since 2000, major progress has been made in eradicating extreme poverty and hunger, increasing sustainable access to drinking water, reversing mortality rates from diseases such as malaria and tuberculosis and improving the living conditions of over 200 million slum dwellers.
2. Nevertheless, many issues still remain to be resolved, such as the high mortality rates amongst young children and maternal mortality in the poorest regions, the insufficient proportion of children who have access to primary education and the large number of people who do not have secured access to basic health-care services, let alone to vaccination programmes or to specific treatment for serious diseases such as HIV/Aids. Integrated strategies are therefore required in many areas to keep the ever-growing global population – an expected 9 billion by 2050 – fit to learn, work and enjoy life.
3. The Parliamentary Assembly is concerned about the persistently high levels of global inequality and the remaining barriers to a more balanced human development, which are also affecting Europe's own destiny. The Assembly considers that Europe should strive to increase its action and influence in order to better live up to its responsibilities while taking into account global interdependencies.
4. Europe's strength and added value in this respect lies in particular in its experience and leadership concerning some of the key issues that have not yet been addressed effectively by the international community, in particular persistent gender inequality, a high rate of violence against women and children, the lack of decent work conditions in many regions of the world and the continuous degradation of our natural environment.
5. Moreover, European experience in the field of good governance could stimulate the effectiveness of global development processes: democratic structures and procedures should therefore be promoted beyond Europe's boundaries and the most urgent issues, such as widespread corruption, should be addressed both within Europe and in developing countries. The efficiency of official development aid should also be improved.
6. Europe has access to some of the solutions to the major challenges of the 21st century, but it is also contributing to some of the current global inequalities through its production and consumption patterns.
7. Europe's contribution should consist first in stepping up efforts to reduce global and regional inequalities under the current MDG framework. It should set good examples as regards good governance and the committed fight against corruption, whilst promoting such measures within and beyond Europe and explicitly addressing some of the key factors hindering development in developing and emerging countries.

1. *Assembly debate* on 30 January 2014 (8th Sitting) (see [Doc. 13368](#), report of the Committee on Social Affairs, Health and Sustainable Development, rapporteur: Sir Alan Meale). *Text adopted by the Assembly* on 30 January 2014 (8th Sitting).



Europe should promote the political willingness for doing so throughout the world, organise awareness-raising campaigns for the general public on global interdependencies and contribute to the international negotiation process by asking that the development framework beyond 2015 be completed by new goals.

8. The Assembly thus calls on member States to:

- 8.1. as regards support provided to various countries under the current MDG framework:
 - 8.1.1. provide assistance to countries in need, including capacity-building programmes aimed at helping countries to stimulate sustainable economic development;
 - 8.1.2. develop targeted programmes and integrated strategies for poverty reduction, building comprehensive health services accessible to all, promoting decent work and creating decent employment;
 - 8.1.3. respond, in the meantime, to the commitments taken within the international aid mechanisms and provide a level of 0.7% of gross domestic product (GDP) as official development assistance;
- 8.2. as regards action to be taken in the field of good governance:
 - 8.2.1. take legislative measures to fight corruption, tax fraud and evasion, both in Europe and beyond, to ensure that a maximum level of public resources is used according to set targets;
 - 8.2.2. strengthen support to democratic institutions, such as parliaments, to allow them to exercise effective oversight of anti-corruption measures as well as of general development and assistance programmes;
 - 8.2.3. promote media freedom and freedom of expression in order to encourage the media and civil society to expose any cases of corruption;
- 8.3. as regards key factors hindering development:
 - 8.3.1. empower women and girls in all spheres of society, including the family, the educational sector, the labour market and political decision-making processes, thus allowing them to access resources and opportunities, and a fair share of power;
 - 8.3.2. promote the guarantee of sexual and reproductive health and rights for women and girls, in particular with a view to avoiding unwanted pregnancies and further reducing maternal mortality;
 - 8.3.3. step up the fight against violence towards women and girls in the most committed manner through prevention programmes and campaigns, including measures to protect victims;
 - 8.3.4. create equal opportunities for women and young people to access quality education and decent jobs;
- 8.4. as regards Europe's contribution to the international negotiation process revising the MDGs for the post-2015 period:
 - 8.4.1. ensure that development assistance becomes once again a priority on political agendas in Europe, and that innovative approaches are sought to support developing countries;
 - 8.4.2. integrate current MDGs into a new set of global Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs);
 - 8.4.3. base this new framework on a cross-sectoral understanding of sustainable development addressing global interdependencies in a straightforward and innovative manner;
 - 8.4.4. promote the idea that the next set of goals should explicitly include measures fostering good democratic governance and the fight against corruption, not least by defining these as preconditions for obtaining international support;
 - 8.4.5. ensure that the challenges identified as key factors for a more balanced global development, such as sustainability and decent work, be given a more prominent place in the upcoming development framework;
 - 8.4.6. continue promoting the principles of the European Landscape Convention (ETS No. 176).

9. The Assembly also invites member States to ensure that the Council of Europe is officially represented at upcoming events and world summits related to this global process, until 2015 and beyond, in order to ensure that the pan-European voice expressed in the present resolution is heard worldwide.