

Development  
Cooperation

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HUMAN RIGHTS, DEMOCRACY AND DEVELOPMENT

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The Council agreed to monitor the progress achieved in strengthening practical and operational support for democracy and human rights in developing countries on the basis of the policy already agreed by the Council and the Member States.

It also adopted the following declaration as a basis for the position on human rights, democracy and development to be presented on behalf of the Community and its Member States at the UN World Conference in Vienna in June 1993.

- "1. The Council of the European Community and the representatives of Member States see the United Nations World Conference on Human Rights to be convened in Vienna in June 1993 as an important opportunity to pursue the international dialogue and co-operation on issues relating to human rights, democracy and development.
2. They re-affirm the major policy resolution adopted by the Council and the Member States in November 1991, supplemented by the conclusions of November 1992 on human rights, democracy and development, which remain valid as the basis for their common position on these subjects. They also note the position paper of April 1993 adopted by the European Community and its Member States within the framework of the Preparatory Committee.
3. The Community and its Member States draw particular attention to the universality and indivisibility of human rights and the obligation of all States to respect them. They stress the important role of development assistance in promoting both economic, social and cultural rights as well as civil and political liberties by means of representative democratic government based on respect for human rights.
4. They underline the link between human rights, democracy and development. Human rights and democracy form part of a larger set of requirements, including good governance and restraint in military spending, necessary to achieve equitable, sustainable economic and social development.
5. The Community and its Member States consider that freedom from hunger and absolute poverty as well as the right to adequate shelter, education and health care are areas which need to be addressed with added urgency.
6. The Community and its Member States have noted the progress achieved so far during the preparatory work before the World Conference. They express determination to continue to play a constructive and consensus-building role in the process towards reaching agreement on a substantive and forward-looking Final Document to be agreed at the World Conference.
7. The Community and its Member States are determined to pursue an open and constructive dialogue with other countries as a means of promoting human rights, democracy and development in all parts of the world.

8. On this basis the Community and its Member States will seek to reflect in the outcome of the Conference the positive experiences gained through practical development co-operation in the field of human rights and democracy; i.a. in relation to the implementation of the Council Resolution of November 1991 in a number of developing countries, and in particular in the framework of the Lomé Convention and the San José development co-operation programme.
9. The Community and its Member States also reaffirm in this context their willingness to consider the possibility of increased assistance to developing countries in which substantive positive changes in human rights and democracy have taken place.
10. One of the central objectives pursued by the Community and its Member States is to provide for a strengthening of the positive support for human rights and democracy by providing technical assistance in key areas, such as institution-building within the public sector, strengthening of a pluralistic civil society and the protection of vulnerable groups.
11. However, in the event of grave and persistent human rights violations or serious interruption of democratic processes, the Community and its Member States, in accordance with their Resolution of 1991, will continue to take appropriate action in the light of the circumstances guided by objective and equitable criteria. Measures will be graduated according to the gravity of each case and might, when necessary, include the suspension of co-operation with the State concerned.
12. The importance of the principle of full participation by the people in the democratic and pluralistic processes, as well as of full observance of human rights, political and civil liberties, the rule of law, the subordination of military and security forces to civil authority, separation of powers and the independence and impartiality of the judiciary is confirmed by the experience of development co-operation.
13. This recognition by the European Community and its development partners should be reflected in the Final Document of the World Conference which should provide for a strengthening of development co-operation in areas such as:
  - constitutional processes;
  - the preparation and holding of free elections, the setting up of democratic institutions, and support for those already created;
  - the strengthening of the judiciary, the administration of justice, training of police, crime prevention, and the treatment of offenders;
  - demobilization and peaceful settlement of ethnic and other conflict;
  - promotion of the role of NGO's and other institutions which are necessary for a pluralistic society;
  - promotion of a free press and other media;
  - promotion of a participative co-operation by enhancing decentralization through the involvement i.a. of organizations and movements at grass root level;

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- the setting up of national and regional independent human rights organizations and of "ombudsman" institutions;
  - special measures to protect and support the rights of women;
  - strategies for the protection of the rights of indigenous people, taking into account their needs and wishes in development processes;
  - special measures to protect vulnerable groups, including persons belonging to minorities, refugees and displaced persons, children and handicapped.
14. The Community and its Member States will endeavour to increase their financial and technical assistance in these areas.
  15. To sustain the co-operation within such areas the administrative and implementing capacity of the UN Centre for Human Rights as well as the funding for advisory services and technical co-operation provided by the United Nations should be substantially expanded.
  16. The Community and its Member States strongly support the system-wide application of human rights in the United Nations. They therefore suggest that appropriate high level follow-up measures be decided by the United Nations World Conference on Human Rights."