

## BRIEFING PAPER ON A MORE AMBITIOUS INTERNATIONAL SOLIDARITY POLICY FOR EUROPE



**The European Parliament and the political parties represented there currently play a crucial role in dealing with the multifaceted crises faced by their partners.**

“Fifty-five per cent of the French think that global issues (climate, war, pandemics) are exerting a growing impact on their daily lives.”<sup>1</sup> That is not surprising, considering that the devastating war in Ukraine, the Covid-19 pandemic and the ever-increasing climate disasters are all highlighting how close the links are between European citizens and their neighbours, as well as the extent to which the partners of the European Union expect it to honour its commitments. A recent survey has moreover shown that the French believe that international cooperation is needed more than ever.<sup>2</sup> In an interconnected world, one of the best investments for the future of Europe is undoubtedly to work for more sustainable, equitable and fair living conditions in the countries where those conditions are most critical.

The European Parliament has a crucial role to play in this issue. Members of the European Parliament (MEPs) help to shape the European Union’s major policy directions, have dual power of appointment and significant control over the European Commission. They also draught and vote on the legislation that will shape the future of European international solidarity policy.

Given these facts, the political programmes and commitments that will be presented to the French people will be decisive in guiding the work that each MEP and each political group chooses to carry out within the European Parliament.

Coordination SUD – with its international solidarity expertise that is acknowledged, legitimate and based on strong links with its international partners – is for this reason proposing guidelines and commitments that political parties could propose to the French in five main areas:

1. Sufficient European funding that responds to the needs of the most vulnerable people
2. A European Parliament which promotes effective humanitarian action
3. Making the European Parliament a driving force for the sustainable development goals

1. Focus 2030 (2022), [Les interdépendances vues par les Français.es](#), 9 November.

2. Ibid.

4. Ambitious European policies promoting gender equality
5. The need to fight the risks of instrumentalization of official development assistance.


## 1 FOR SUFFICIENT EUROPEAN FUNDING THAT RESPONDS TO THE NEEDS OF THE MOST VULNERABLE PEOPLE

### What can the European Parliament do?

- ▶ Strive to make development assistance meet global challenges as well as the European commitments
- ▶ Enhance the quality of aid by targeting sectors and people with urgent needs
- ▶ Promote access to financing for all NGOs as well as their power of initiative and innovation

### Why?

- ▶ Because 65% of the French want development assistance to the poorest countries to be maintained or increased.<sup>3</sup>
- ▶ Because humanitarian needs in 2023 have increased by 25% compared to 2022 and because, as of April 2023, almost 350 million people are in need of humanitarian assistance.<sup>4</sup>
- ▶ Because, according to the World Bank, up to 95 million people fell into extreme poverty by 2022 as a result of the Covid-19 health crisis.<sup>5</sup>
- ▶ Because the right of initiative helps boost the effectiveness of French ODA, thanks to its methodical and innovative approaches.<sup>6</sup>

 **GO FURTHER:** [Go to the note dedicated to fundings](#)

## 2 FOR A EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT WHICH PROMOTES EFFECTIVE HUMANITARIAN ACTION

### What can the European Parliament do?

- ▶ Commit to supporting humanitarian action
- ▶ Support humanitarian exemptions in EU autonomous sanctions regimes
- ▶ Commit to curbing the criminalisation of aid

### Why?

- ▶ Because the systematic introduction of a humanitarian exemption in all EU and Member State sanctions regimes would make it possible to comply with commitments to UN Security Council Resolution 2664 (2022) establishing a cross-cutting humanitarian exemption for UN sanctions regimes.<sup>7</sup>
- ▶ Because the number of recorded attacks on humanitarian workers has more than doubled since 2010.<sup>8</sup>
- ▶ Because respect for humanitarian principles (humanity, impartiality, neutrality and independence) requires genuine protection for aid workers,<sup>9</sup> and violations of international humanitarian law go largely unpunished despite existing protection frameworks.<sup>10</sup>
- ▶ Because donor compliance and accountability requirements undermine the quality and effectiveness of aid by delaying humanitarian response times and diverting resources away from activities targeting vulnerable people.<sup>11</sup>

 **GO FURTHER:** [Go to the note dedicated to humanitarian issues](#)

## 3 MAKING THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT A DRIVING FORCE FOR THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

### What can the European Parliament do?

- ▶ Establish governance to align EU policies with the SDGs
- ▶ Monitor the impact of EU policies on the SDGs and developing countries through comprehensive evaluation systems
- ▶ Implement an ambitious European Strategy to promote all the SDGs

3. Focus 2030 (2022), [Une majorité de Français.es en faveur d'un maintien ou d'une augmentation de l'aide publique au développement](#), 8 December.

4. <https://humanitarianaction.info/>

5. Oxfam France (2023), [La pauvreté dans le monde n'est pas une fatalité](#), 3 March.

6. OECD (2018), [Examens de l'OCDE sur la coopération pour le développement : France 2018. Examens de l'OCDE sur la coopération pour le développement](#), OECD Publishing, Paris.

7. United Nations Security Council (2022), [Resolution 2664 \(2022\)](#), 9 December.

8. AWSD (2023), [Major attacks on aid workers: Summary statistics](#), updated in February.

9. European External Action Service (2021), [Discussion Series: Ensuring the protection, safety, and security of humanitarian workers and medical personnel in armed conflicts](#), pp 13-14, June.

10. Jean-Yves Le Drian (2021), [Déclaration de M. Jean-Yves Le Drian, ministre de l'Europe et des affaires étrangères, sur le droit international humanitaire, à New York le 22 septembre 2021](#), Vie publique, September.

11. IASC, [Harmonize and simplify reporting requirements](#).

## Why?

- ▶ Because the promotion of sustainable global trade and value chains, which is an integral part of the PCSD, could bring in at least €133 billion a year for the EU.<sup>12</sup>
- ▶ Because France has committed in its legislation to act for effective PCSD and to promote the SDGs.<sup>13</sup>
- ▶ Because even though the EU is achieving good results for the 2030 Agenda within Europe itself, its impact on the SDGs in the rest of the world is still negative.<sup>14</sup> Coherency measures to alleviate this problem thus seem crucial.
- ▶ Because these measures are in line with UNEP<sup>15</sup> and OECD<sup>16</sup> recommendations, and these institutions are experts on the topic.

 **GO FURTHER:** [Go to the note dedicated to Agenda 2030](#)

## 4 FOR AMBITIOUS EUROPEAN POLICIES PROMOTING GENDER EQUALITY

### What can the European Parliament do?

- ▶ Create a support fund for local feminist organisations
- ▶ Strengthening financial and human resources to promote a feminist foreign policy
- ▶ Involving women and girls in the governance of EU external action

## Why?

- ▶ Because gender equality is one of the founding values of the EU and a key element in achieving the SDGs – and yet, according to the UN, real gender equality will take another 300 years.<sup>17</sup>
- ▶ Because 59% of the French believe that ending discrimination against women and girls is crucial for ending poverty worldwide.<sup>18</sup>
- ▶ Because local feminist CSOs often operate under threat and have very little access to public funding, despite the fact that they are an especially relevant vehicle for advancing gender equality because of their access to communities and to their knowledge of and proximity to the target populations and their sociocultural norms.<sup>19</sup>
- ▶ Because funding for women's rights organisations and institutions promoting gender equality in partner countries represented only 1.4% of all European ODA focused on gender equality in 2019 and 2020.<sup>20</sup>
- ▶ Because 70% of the French agree that the French government should support organisations around the world which defend women's rights.<sup>21</sup>
- ▶ Because the creation of a European feminist fund would enable the EU to increase the share of its funding with gender equality as its main objective, to which France has also made a commitment in its 2021 Act on Inclusive Development (i.e. for it to reach 20% of total ODA).<sup>22</sup>

 **GO FURTHER:** [Go to the note dedicated to Gender Equality](#)

## 5 ON THE NEED TO FIGHT THE RISKS OF INSTRUMENTALISATION OF OFFICIAL DEVELOPMENTS ASSISTANCE

### What can the European Parliament do?

- ▶ Strengthen control over migration projects in order to fight the instrumentalisation of aid and ensure that human rights are respected
- ▶ Ensure prosecution-free, neutral and impartial humanitarian action
- ▶ Ensure greater transparency to fight the rerouting of aid to private economic interests

## Why?

- ▶ Because some restrictive policies tend to bolster clandestine networks, which develop new illegal migration routes.<sup>23</sup>

12. EPRS (2023), *Increasing European added value in an age of global challenges*, European Parliament, February.

13. Journal Officiel (2021), *Loi n° 2021-1031 du 4 août 2021 de programmation relative au développement solidaire et à la lutte contre les inégalités mondiales*, Légifrance, August.

14. Lafortune, G., Fuller, G., Bermont-Diaz, L., Kloke-Lesch, A., Koundouri, P., Riccaboni, A. (2022). *Achieving the SDGs: Europe's Compass in a Multipolar World*. *Europe Sustainable Development Report 2022*. SDSN and SDSN Europe, Paris.

15. UNEP (2020), *Methodology for SDG-indicator 17.14.1: Mechanisms in place to enhance policy coherence for sustainable development*, April.

16. OECD (2019), *Recommandation du Conseil sur la cohérence des politiques au service du développement durable*, OECD Legal Instruments.

17. UN Women (2022), *Progrès vers la réalisation des objectifs du développement durable. Gros plan sur l'égalité des sexes 2022*. Department of Economic and Social Affairs.

18. Focus 2030 (2023), *Communiqué de presse: Sondage d'opinion du Development Engagements Lab à l'occasion de la journée internationale des droits des femmes*, March 7.

19. Féministes en action (2022), *Une étude sur les mobilisations et besoins des organisations féministes des pays des Suds*

20. OECD (2022), *Aid in Support of Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment. Donor charts*, June.

21. Focus 2030 (2022), *Les interdépendances vues par les Français.es*, 9 November.

22. Journal Officiel (2021), *Loi n° 2021-1031 du 4 août 2021 de programmation relative au développement solidaire et à la lutte contre les inégalités mondiales*, Légifrance, August.

23. National Assembly (2021), *Rapport fait au nom de la Commission d'enquête sur les migrations, les déplacements de populations et les conditions de vie et d'accès au droit des migrants, réfugiés et apatrides en regard des engagements nationaux, européens et internationaux de la France*, p.63, November.

- ▶ Because using ODA to reduce migration does not work and even produces the opposite effect in the short and medium term by offering people the economic opportunity to move from one location to another.<sup>24</sup>
- ▶ Because this instrumentalising runs counter to the stated desire of the EU and France to review its partnerships, particularly with the African Union, on a more egalitarian basis.
- ▶ Because in the Paris Declaration (2005),<sup>25</sup> the Accra Agenda for Action (2008)<sup>26</sup> and the Busan Partnership (2011),<sup>27</sup> France pledged not to associate development policies with migration policies.
- ▶ Because the foundation for the international migration policies upheld by France must be the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948) statements on the subject, the Geneva Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees, and the other agreements which France itself has helped to spread and make adopted.

 **GO FURTHER:** [Go to the note dedicated to ODA instrumentalisation](#)

## IMPROVE COOPERATION BETWEEN CIVIL SOCIETY AND THE EU

CSOs (civil society organisations) play a key role in enriching public policy, by providing public authorities with a wide range of expertise and opinions from civil society. They draw on their experience in the field to make these opinions known. CSOs must be informed about public policy and have the opportunity to influence it, as they can propose concrete solutions to the problems raised. They also support parliamentary work by taking part in committees, helping to draft amendments and facilitating communication between MEPs and relevant players on the ground. It is therefore through their own work – and also by supporting greater participation by CSOs in the work of the Council of the European Union and the EC – that MEPs can contribute to EU policies that leave no one behind. Finally, special attention should be paid to the inclusion of organisations of diasporas, women, children, and youth; any organisation representing minority and minoritized groups; and organisations of various sizes.

24. Michael A. Clemens (2014), *Does Development Reduce Migration?*, Institute of Labor Economics, October.

25. OECD (2005), *Déclaration de Paris sur l'efficacité de l'aide au développement*, OECD Publishing, Paris.

26. OECD (2011), *Programme d'action d'Accra*, OECD Publishing, Paris.

27. OECD (2011), *Partenariat de Busan pour une coopération efficace au service du développement*, December.

### Coordination SUD is the national coordinating body of French NGOs working for international solidarity.



**COORDINATION SUD**

[www.coordinationsud.org](http://www.coordinationsud.org)

Coordination SUD was founded in 1994 and currently comprises 184 NGOs, either as direct members or through six networks of associations (CLONG-Volontariat, Cnajep, Co-ordination Humanitaire et Développement, CRID, FORIM and Groupe initiatives). These organisations work in the fields of emergency humanitarian and development aid, environmental protection, human rights, advocacy and global citizenship education for international solidarity – with a special focus on helping the most disadvantaged groups of people.

Coordination SUD's Europe Commission brings together member NGOs that carry out advocacy work on European issues relating to international solidarity, as well as Coordination SUD's representatives to CONCORD Europe, the European confederation of humanitarian and development NGOs of which Coordination SUD is a member.

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With the support of



This publication is supported by the European Union and the Agence française de développement. The ideas and opinions expressed herein are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the European Union and the Agence française de développement.