

BRIEFING PAPER ON A MORE AMBITIOUS INTERNATIONAL SOLIDARITY POLICY FOR EUROPE



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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.”¹ 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.² 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 adapted to the needs of target populations
2. Better protection of humanitarian space and personnel
3. Pro-SDG European policies coherent with the 2030 Agenda

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

4. Ambitious European policies promoting gender equality
5. Official development assistance which is independent of any issue related to European internal policy, in particular its migration policy.

1 FOR SUFFICIENT EUROPEAN FUNDING ADAPTED TO THE NEEDS OF TARGET POPULATIONS

What can the European Parliament do?

- ▶ Undertake, during annual and multiannual budget negotiations, to strengthen the humanitarian and development budget.³
- ▶ Encourage EU member countries to budget at least 0.7% of their gross national income to ODA each year.
- ▶ Undertake to channel at least 15% of EU external aid funding through CSOs.⁴
- ▶ Undertake to increase the share of EU funding earmarked for CSO right of initiative within the total funding channelled through CSOs.
- ▶ Undertake to direct 50% of European ODA to LDCs and to the basic social sectors.

Why?

- ▶ Because 65% of the French want development assistance to the poorest countries to be maintained or increased.⁵
- ▶ 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.⁶
- ▶ 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.⁷
- ▶ Because the right of initiative helps boost the effectiveness of French ODA, thanks to its methodical and innovative approaches.⁸

2 FOR BETTER PROTECTION OF HUMANITARIAN SPACE AND PERSONNEL

What can the European Parliament do?

- ▶ Bolster and support European diplomacy so that it prioritises respect for humanitarian space as a key component of its own actions, in particular through support and promotion of the “The Call for Humanitarian Action,”⁹ so that all Member States sign it.
- ▶ Enhance the monitoring of large-scale humanitarian crises, in particular through greater involvement by the Committee on Development (DEVE) and the Permanent Rapporteur for Humanitarian Aid, in liaison with DG ECHO,¹⁰ the EEAS¹¹ and the Council of the EU.
- ▶ Support civil society initiatives to bolster the protection of humanitarian space and humanitarian and health personnel.
- ▶ Monitor humanitarian aid spending and regularly interview CSOs to ensure that funds are provided free of any political or security agenda, based on the needs of the local people and in line with humanitarian principles.
- ▶ Enhance the monitoring of the impact of sanctions and restrictive measures on humanitarian action, encourage NGOs to report on how those sanctions and measures impact their own actions, and take into account the solutions those NGOs propose.
- ▶ Support the introduction of blanket exemptions for humanitarian actions, without time restrictions, in all European sanctions regimes including mixed and autonomous ones, in line with the spirit of UN Security Council Resolution 2664 (2022).¹²

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.¹³
- ▶ Because the number of recorded attacks on humanitarian workers has more than doubled since 2010.¹⁴

3. European Commission (2021), *Regulation (EU) 2021/947 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 9 June 2021*, EUR-Lex, 9 June.

4. Development Aid Committee (2022), *Aid for Civil Society Organisations: Statistics based on DAC Members' reporting to the Creditor Reporting System database (CRS) 2019-2020*, OECD, June.

5. 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.

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

7. Oxfam France (2023), *La pauvreté dans le monde n'est pas une fatalité*, 3 March.

8. 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.

9. France Diplomacy (2021), *A call action to bolster respect for international humanitarian law*, French Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs, September.

10. Directorate-General for European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations.

11. European External Action Service.

12. United Nations Security Council (2022), *Resolution 2664 (2022)*, 9 December.

13. United Nations Security Council (2022), *Resolution 2664 (2022)*, 9 December.

14. AWSO (2023), *Major attacks on aid workers: Summary statistics*, updated in February.

- ▶ Because respect for humanitarian principles (humanity, impartiality, neutrality and independence) requires genuine protection for aid workers,¹⁵ and violations of international humanitarian law go largely unpunished despite existing protection frameworks.¹⁶
- ▶ 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.¹⁷

3 FOR PRO-SDG EUROPEAN POLICIES COHERENT WITH THE 2030 AGENDA

What can the European Parliament do?

- ▶ Work with the European Commission to ensure that policy coherence for sustainable development (PCSD) is included in all legislative and political processes.
- ▶ Commit to the European Commission taking responsibility for the PCSD, by drawing up a roadmap for each Commissioner on how each of their DGs intends to achieve the SDGs, and thus fulfil the 2030 Agenda.
- ▶ Push for the creation of a network dedicated to PCSD at European Parliament level.

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.¹⁸
- ▶ Because France has committed in its legislation to act for effective PCSD and to promote the SDGs.¹⁹
- ▶ 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.²⁰ Coherency measures to alleviate this problem thus seem crucial.
- ▶ Because these measures are in line with UNEP²¹ and OECD²² recommendations, and these institutions are experts on the topic.

4 FOR AMBITIOUS EUROPEAN POLICIES PROMOTING GENDER EQUALITY

What can the European Parliament do?

- ▶ Commit to ensuring that gender issues are mainstreamed into all EU external policies, to avoid reinforcing gender inequalities or creating new ones.
- ▶ Undertake to create a feminist fund along the lines of the French Support Fund for Feminist Organisations (*Fonds de Soutien aux Organisations Féministes* - FSOFF), aimed at supporting local organisations working for the rights of women and girls.
- ▶ Ensure that all EU institutions meet the target of 85% of ODA that contributes to gender equality.
- ▶ Commit to a new target of 20% of funding prioritising gender equality (in line with OECD recommendations), up from the current 5%.

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.²³
- ▶ Because 59% of the French believe that ending discrimination against women and girls is crucial for ending poverty worldwide.²⁴
- ▶ 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.²⁵
- ▶ 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 2020.²⁶

15. 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.

16. 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.

17. IASC, *Harmonize and simplify reporting requirements*.

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

19. 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.

20. 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.

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

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

23. 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.

24. 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.

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

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

- ▶ Because 70% of the French agree that the French government should support organisations around the world which defend women's rights.²⁷
- ▶ 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).²⁸

5 FOR ODA THAT IS INDEPENDENT OF ANY ISSUE RELATED TO EUROPEAN POLITICS, IN PARTICULAR ITS MIGRATION POLICY

What can the European Parliament do?

- ▶ Fight policies which turn ODA and its use into a tool for migration policy.
- ▶ Support greater transparency when negotiating agreements with third countries and mainstream mechanisms for monitoring respect for fundamental rights into all forms of partnership with third countries, by including IOs²⁹ and CSOs.
- ▶ Ensure that fundamental rights are mainstreamed into agreements and declarations on migration cooperation with States characterised by weak governance that lacks respect for the rule of law.
- ▶ Refuse to make ODA conditional on good cooperation from third countries in terms of readmission policy.

Why?

- ▶ Because some restrictive policies tend to bolster clandestine networks, which develop new illegal migration routes.³⁰
- ▶ 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.³¹
- ▶ 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),³² the Accra Agenda for Action (2008)³³ and the Busan Partnership (2011),³⁴ 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.

27. Focus 2030 (2022), [Les interdépendances planétaires vues par les français.es](#), 9 November.

28. 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.

29. International organizations.

30. 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.

31. Michael A. Clemens (2014), [Does Development Reduce Migration?](#), Institute of Labor Economics, October.

32. OECD (2005), [Déclaration de Paris sur l'efficacité de l'aide au développement](#), OECD Publishing, Paris.

33. OECD (2011), [Programme d'action d'Accra](#), OECD Publishing, Paris.

34. 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

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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