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DRAFT REPORT

on the Annual report on human rights and democracy in the world 2013, and
the European Union's policy on the matter
(2014/0000(INI))

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MOTION FOR A EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT RESOLUTION

on the Annual report on human rights and democracy in the world 2013, and the European Union policy on the matter (2014/0000(INI))

The European Parliament,

- having regard to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) and other United Nations human rights treaties and instruments,
- having regard to Article 21 of the Treaty on the European Union (TEU),
- having regard to the EU Strategic Framework and Action Plan on Human Rights and Democracy (11855/2012) as adopted by the Foreign Affairs Council on 25 June 2012,
- having regard to the EU Annual Report on Human Rights and Democracy in the World in 2013, adopted by the Council on 23 June 2014,
- having regard to the Annual Report on the Main Aspects and Basic Choices of the CFSP in 2013, endorsed by the Council on 22 July 2014,
- having regard to the Commission’s Annual Report 2014 on the European Union’s development and external assistance policies and their implementation in 2013 (COM(2014)0501), adopted on 13 August 2014, and the accompanying documents,
- having regard to its resolution of 11 December 2013 on the Annual Report on Human Rights and Democracy in the World 2012 and the European Union’s policy on the matter¹,
- having regard to the European Union Human Rights Guidelines, in particular to the Guidelines to promote and protect the enjoyment of all human rights by lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex (LGBTI) persons, the Guidelines on the promotion and protection of freedom of religion or belief, both adopted by the Council on 24 June 2013, and the Guidelines on freedom of expression online and offline, adopted on 12 May 2014,
- having regard to the Council conclusions of 23 June 2014 on the tenth anniversary of the EU Guidelines on Human Rights Defenders,
- having regard to its resolution of 17 June 2010 on EU policies in favour of human rights defenders²,

¹ Texts adopted, P7_TA(2013)0575.

² OJ C 236 E, 12.8.2011, p. 69.

- having regard to its resolution of 13 March 2014 on the EU priorities for the 25th session of the United Nations Human Rights Council¹,
- having regard to its recommendation to the Council of 2 April 2014 on the 69th session of the United Nations General Assembly²,
- having regard to its resolution of 17 November 2011 on EU support for the ICC: facing challenges and overcoming difficulties³,
- having regard to its resolution of 17 July 2014 on the crime of aggression⁴,
- having regard to its resolution of 7 July 2011 on EU external policies in favour of democratisation⁵,
- having regard to the UN General Assembly resolution of 20 December 2012 (A/RES/67/176) on a moratorium on the use of death penalty,
- having regard to its resolution of 11 March 2014 on the eradication of torture in the world⁶,
- having regard to UN Security Council resolutions 1325, 1820, 1888, 1889 and 1960 on women, peace and security,
- having regard to the report on the EU indicators for the Comprehensive Approach to the EU implementation of UN Security Council resolutions 1325 and 1820 on Women, Peace and Security, adopted by the Council on 13 May 2011,
- having regard to the Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights: Implementing the United Nations ‘Protect, Respect and Remedy’ Framework, endorsed by the UN Human Rights Council in its resolution 17/4 of 16 June 2011,
- having regard to the ICT (information and communication technologies) Sector Guide on Implementing the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights, published by the Commission on 17 June 2013,
- having regard to its resolution of 25 November 2010 on corporate social responsibility in international trade agreements⁷,
- having regard to its resolution of 25 November 2010 on human rights and social and environmental standards in international trade agreements⁸,

¹ Texts adopted, P7_TA(2014)0252.

² Texts adopted, P7_TA(2014)0259.

³ OJ C 59 E, 28.2.2012, p. 150.

⁴ Texts adopted, P8_TA(2014)0013.

⁵ OJ C 33 E, 5.2.2013, p. 165.

⁶ Texts adopted, P7_TA(2014)0206.

⁷ OJ C 99 E, 3.4.2012, p.101.

⁸ OJ C 99 E, 3.4.2012, p. 31.

- having regard to its resolution of 25 November 2010 on international trade policy in the context of climate change imperatives¹,
 - having regard to the Council conclusions of 14 May 2012 on ‘Increasing the Impact of EU Development Policy: an Agenda for Change’,
 - having regard to the Joint Communication of the Commission and the Vice-President of the Commission / High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy (VP/HR) of 5 March 2014 (JOIN(2014)8) to the European Parliament and the Council on ‘Responsible sourcing of minerals originating in conflict-affected and high-risk areas: Towards an integrated EU approach’,
 - having regard to the United Nations Convention against Corruption (UNCAC),
 - having regard to its resolution of 8 October 2013 on corruption in the public and private sectors: the impact on human rights in third countries²,
 - having regard to the Council conclusions on the EU’s comprehensive approach, 12 May 2014,
 - having regard to its recommendation to the Council of 18 April 2013 on the UN principle of the ‘Responsibility to Protect’ (‘R2P’)³,
 - having regard to Rule 132(2) of its Rules of Procedure,
 - having regard to Rule 52 of its Rules of Procedure,
 - having regard to the report of the Committee on Foreign Affairs and the opinions of the Committee on Development and the Committee on Women’s Rights and Gender Equality (A8-0000/2014),
- A. whereas Article 21 TEU further strengthened the EU’s commitment to act on the international scene guided by the principles of democracy, the rule of law, the universality and indivisibility of human rights and fundamental freedoms, respect for human dignity, the principles of equality and solidarity, and respect for the principles of the United Nations Charter, the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union and international law;
- B. whereas respect for, and the promotion and safeguarding of, the universality and indivisibility of human rights are cornerstones of the EU’s action on the international scene;
- C. whereas the EU’s credibility in its external relations will be bolstered by increasing consistency between its internal and external policies in relation to human rights;
- D. whereas the new Vice-President of the Commission and High Representative of the

¹ OJ C 99 E, 3.4.2012, p. 94.

² Texts adopted, P7_TA(2013)0394.

³ Texts adopted, P7_TA(2013)0180.

Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy (VP/HR) has stated that human rights will be one of her overarching priorities and that she intends to use them as a compass with regard to all her relations with third countries; whereas she has also reiterated the EU's commitment to promoting human rights in all areas of foreign relations 'without exception'; whereas the adoption of the new EU Action Plan for human rights and democracy and the renewal of the mandate of the EU Special Representative for human rights will be on the EU agenda at the beginning of 2015;

- E. whereas on 23 June 2014 the Council adopted the EU Annual Report on Human Rights and Democracy in the World in 2013, covering the first full year of implementation of the EU Strategic Framework and Action Plan for human rights and democracy; whereas 2013 was also the first full year of the new mandate of the EU Special Representative for Human Rights;
- F. whereas the EU's Annual Report, and events after its reporting period, serve as a stark reminder of the grave human cost of the non-observance of human rights; whereas there is also a major material and budgetary cost to the EU as a result of the non-observance of human rights, when failure to respect human rights and lack of legitimate democratic participation lead to instability, failed states, humanitarian crises and armed conflicts, phenomena to which the EU is obliged to respond;
- G. whereas the EU's commitment to effective multilateralism, with the UN at its core, is an integral part of the Union's external policy and is rooted in the conviction that a multilateral system founded on universal rules and values is best suited to addressing global crises, challenges and threats;
- H. whereas the European Union and its Member States have been staunch allies of the International Criminal Court since its inception, providing it with financial, political, diplomatic and logistical support while promoting the universality of the Rome Statute and defending its integrity with the purpose of strengthening the independence of the Court;
- I. whereas in its resolution of 17 July 2014 Parliament reiterated its strong support for the adoption of the Kampala Amendments to the Rome Statute of the ICC, including the amendment on the crime of aggression, and called on all EU Member States to ratify them and incorporate them into their national legislation; whereas the amendment on the crime of aggression will contribute to the rule of law at the international level and to international peace and security by deterring the illegal use of force and thus proactively contributing to the prevention of such crimes and to consolidating a lasting peace;
- J. whereas the focus of the 59th session of the UN Commission on the Status of Women, to be held in New York from 9 to 20 March 2015, will be the follow-up to the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, including the current challenges that impede its implementation and therefore the achievement of gender equality and the empowerment of women, and also the opportunities for achieving gender equality and the empowerment of women in the post-2015 Millennium Development Goals agenda;
- K. whereas there is a clear relationship between corruption and violations of human rights; whereas corruption in the public and private sectors perpetrates and aggravates

inequalities and discrimination, and consequently prevents the equal enjoyment of civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights; whereas it is proven that acts of corruption are often linked to human rights violations, abuse of power and lack of accountability;

- L. whereas labour rights and trade union rights are under serious attack around the world, while the ways in which companies operate have a profound impact on the rights of workers, communities, and consumers within and outside Europe; whereas international human rights law imposes on states the duty to protect human rights, to ensure that the activities of corporations under their jurisdiction do not violate human rights, and to ensure that effective forms of remedy are available to victims;
- M. whereas Article 16 of the UDHR states that men and women of full ages, without any limitation due to race, nationality or religion, have the right to marry and to found a family, and are entitled to equal rights as to marriage, both during marriage and at its dissolution;
- N. whereas Article 14 of the UDHR recognises the right of persons to seek asylum from persecution in other countries; whereas the UN Convention on the Status of Refugees clearly states that all refugees are entitled to special protection and that no state shall expel or return a refugee to a territory where he or she faces persecution or threats to life or freedom;
- O. whereas the effects of climate change, such as increasing temperatures, rising sea levels and more extreme weather conditions, will intensify the challenges of global instability and, consequently, the threat of serious human rights violations; whereas the term 'climate refugee', intended to describe people who are forced to flee their homes and seek refuge abroad as a consequence of climate change, is not yet recognised in international law or in any legally binding international agreement;
- P. whereas this report, while drafted in response to the EU Annual Report adopted by the Council, is a forward-looking analysis of the EU's activities in this policy area; whereas Parliament, in its resolutions on the previous Annual Reports and on the review of the EU human rights strategy, has stressed the need for a continued reflection on its own practices related to the mainstreaming of human rights in its activities and to the follow-up of its urgency resolutions on breaches of democracy, human rights and the rule of law;

Centrality of human rights in EU external policies

1. Recalls that the preamble to the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union affirms that the EU 'places the individual at the heart of its activities'; stresses that this was not intended as an abstract concept but, on the contrary, these words implied an emphasis on real life, on the concrete aspects of existence, and on giving fundamental needs a constitutional basis, founded on the inviolable dignity of each and every person;
2. Calls on all the EU institutions and Member States to place human rights at the centre of the EU's relations with all third countries, including its strategic partners and in all high-level statements and meetings; emphasises the importance of effective, consistent

and coherent implementation of the EU's human rights policy, in line with the clear obligations laid down in Article 21 of the Treaty on European Union and in the EU Strategic Framework on human rights and democracy; commends the new Vice-President of the Commission and High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy (VP/HR) for openly stating her forthright commitment to the implementation of these principles;

3. Stresses the importance for the EU Member States of speaking with one voice in support of the indivisibility and universality of human rights and, in particular, of ratifying all the international human rights instruments established by the UN; calls on the EU to uphold the indivisibility of human rights, including those enshrined in the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, in conformity with Article 21 TEU; calls for the EU to further promote universal human rights standards as the basis for its engagement with third countries and regional organisations, in both political and human rights dialogues;
4. Points out that in addition to human suffering, the EU should also note the material and budgetary cost of non-observance of human rights where failure to respect human rights and lack of legitimate democratic participation lead to instability, corruption, failed states, humanitarian crises or armed conflicts, phenomena which undermine the EU's efforts in its development policy, and to which the EU or its Member States are obliged to react in the security policy domain; welcomes, in this regard, the EU's recent efforts to include violations of human rights in its early warning matrix linked to crisis prevention; calls, however, for a stronger preventative action, and urges the VP/HR, the Commission and the Member States to develop a human rights-based crisis prevention element which should be added to the EU Comprehensive Approach to external conflicts and crises;

EU Annual Report as the reporting tool for EU human rights and democracy policy

5. Welcomes the adoption by the Council of the EU Annual Report on Human Rights and Democracy in the World in 2013; invites the new VP/HR to make a commitment for the future to participate in two dedicated annual debates on the EU's human rights and democracy policy in plenary sessions of Parliament, to present the EU report, and to respond to Parliament's report;
6. Commends the External Action Service and the Commission for their comprehensive and clear reporting on EU action taken during the reporting period; reiterates, however, its view that the country reports in particular should have a more rigorous framework based on a set of indicators that would allow for the setting of benchmarks to assess both positive and negative trends, evaluate the efficiency of the EU's actions, and provide grounds for adapting the levels of EU support in line with progress achieved with regard to human rights, democracy, the rule of law and good governance; notes that the use of such public indicators would be in line with several objectives mentioned in the EU Action Plan on Human Rights and Democracy, and would permit greater consistency in implementing human rights conditionality or assessing the human rights impact of EU policies;
7. Maintains the view that the EU institutions should strive together to improve the format

of the report with a view to enabling it to fulfil its potential as a communication tool while not losing its comprehensiveness as an implementation report on the EU Strategic Framework and the Action Plan on Human Rights and Democracy; reiterates its readiness to be part of an active and constructive cooperation among the EU institutions in the preparation of future reports;

The implementation of the EU strategic framework and action plan

8. Reiterates its appreciation of the EU Strategic Framework and Action Plan on Human Rights and Democracy, adopted by the Council in 2012, as a major milestone in breaking new ground in policy development and in reconfirming the EU's commitment to the Treaty obligation to mainstream human rights in all EU external policies 'without exception';
9. Calls on the EEAS and the Commission to prepare a proper implementation report on the first EU Action Plan on Human Rights and Democracy (2012-2014), and calls on the VP/HR and the EEAS to engage the Member States, the Commission, Parliament and civil society in the review and consultations leading to the adoption of a new Action Plan, to take effect in early 2015; welcomes the discussions aimed at achieving better prioritisation of objectives in the new Action Plan, but warns against lowering the level of ambition in terms of mainstreaming human rights across EU policy areas;
10. Expresses its particular concern over the implementation of the commitment made in the Strategic Framework to 'place human rights at the centre of EU relations with all third countries, including its strategic partners'; urges, accordingly, studied attention by the VP/HR and the EEAS to implementing this commitment and to ensuring human rights and democracy mainstreaming in the EU's relations with its strategic partners in such central contexts as summit meetings and Council conclusions;

Mandate of the EU Special Representative on Human Rights

11. Recognises the importance of the mandate given to the first ever EU Special Representative (EUSR) for Human Rights and of the work done so far; encourages the EUSR to continue to enhance the EU's visibility and engagement with multilateral and regional human rights mechanisms (the UN, the Council of Europe, the OSCE, ASEAN, the African Union, the OIC), to promote key EU thematic priorities, including those reflected in the recently adopted EU human rights guidelines, to work for the empowerment of civil society throughout the world, and to contribute to the mainstreaming, coherence, consistency and effectiveness of EU human rights policy;
12. Calls on the Council to adopt as a general principle the practice of including cooperation with the EUSR for Human Rights systematically in the mandate of future geographic EUSRs;
13. Requests that the Council institutionalise the position of the EUSR for Human Rights so that it can become a permanent function;

Internal/external coherence in EU human rights and democracy policy

14. Stresses that EU human rights policy needs to be consistent in complying with the Treaty obligations, ensuring coherence between internal and external policies, and avoiding double standards; calls, therefore, for the adoption of EU Foreign Affairs Council Conclusions on human rights regarding strategic partners; calls, in this context, for the establishment of common thresholds for Member States and for EU officials in terms of the human rights concerns that they have to raise, as a minimum, with their strategic partner counterparts;

EU human rights policy tools

Human rights country strategies and the role of EU Delegations

15. Commends the EEAS for the successful completion of the first cycle of human rights country strategies developed with a strong emphasis on ownership at the EU Delegation level; regrets, however, the continued lack of transparency regarding the contents of the country strategies; encourages the EEAS to adopt indicators to evaluate their efficacy, and to treat the country sections of the Annual Report more explicitly as constituting implementation reports on the country strategies;
16. Welcomes the nearly completed network of human rights focal points and liaison officers for human rights defenders in EU Delegations; calls on the VP/HR and the EEAS to develop clear operational guidelines as to their role in the Delegations in order to enable them to fully realise their potential, to create credible standards and to avoid inconsistencies between EU Delegations;

Human rights dialogues and consultations

17. Reiterates its support for dedicated human rights dialogues as a tool of EU human rights policy; recognises the value of engagement in human rights-specific dialogue also with countries with serious human rights problems; underlines, however, the need for the EU to draw clear political conclusions when the human rights dialogue does not lead to positive outcomes, and in such cases to place more emphasis on public diplomacy with a view to ensuring that the public credibility of the EU's human rights policy is not endangered; warns, furthermore, against diverting human rights discussions away from high-level political dialogues;

EU Guidelines on human rights

18. Welcomes the adoption by the Council of the EU Guidelines on human rights for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex people and the EU Guidelines on freedom of religion or belief, both during the reporting year 2013, as well as the Guidelines on freedom of expression online and offline, in 2014;
19. Reminds the EEAS and the Council, nevertheless, of the challenge of implementation and consequently of the need to evaluate the implementation of the EU Guidelines at the country level; encourages the EEAS and Member States also to engage in continued training and awareness-raising among EEAS and EU Delegation staff, as well as among Member State diplomats, so as to make sure that the EU human rights guidelines have the intended effect in shaping actual policies on the ground;

EU policies to support democratisation and elections

20. Stresses the importance of following up on the reports and recommendations of Election Observation Missions by using these as part of a 'road map for democracy' in the country concerned and by mandating the Chief Observer to exercise a special role in the follow-up monitoring of the implementation of the recommendations, as a coherent part of Parliament's comprehensive democracy support approach and with the support of Parliament's standing bodies (including the Democracy Support and Election Coordination Group);
21. Calls on the EU to continue to work for the definition of best practices in this area in order to support and consolidate democratisation processes; encourages the development of both policy and operational tools to be applied in priority countries in order to integrate human rights and democracy support measures, including conflict prevention measures and mediation, into the EU approach in a coherent, flexible and credible manner;
22. Welcomes the pilot country work conducted so far by nine EU Delegations to achieve increased coherence for democracy support in the EU's external relations, as initiated in the Council conclusions of 2009 and 2010 and as embedded in the EU Strategic Framework and Action Plan for Human Rights and Democracy in 2012;
23. Requests that the Commission and the EEAS enhance coordination of EU action with regard to the second generation of pilot countries so as to ensure that all EU institutions participate and combine their expertise in the effective pursuit of democracy support in third countries, in line with Parliament's comprehensive democracy support approach;

EU support for human rights defenders

24. Welcomes the dedicated Council conclusions on human rights defenders on the tenth anniversary of the EU Guidelines on Human Rights Defenders (HRDs); commends, furthermore, the Commission for its increased use of EIDHR funding to provide emergency grants to human rights defenders under imminent threat, and encourages the Commission to further explore new ways of supporting HRDs;
25. Reiterates its call on the EEAS to continue protecting NGOs, human rights defenders and civil society activists by raising the effectiveness of EU human rights dialogues and by promoting EU thematic priorities and human rights guidelines; in this context, encourages the organisation of campaigns aimed at reaching human rights defenders also in the more remote areas of third countries, in order to help implement EU policy objectives;
26. Requests that the EEAS and the EU Delegations engage with human rights defenders in a pragmatic political dialogue aimed at finding the best ways to support an enabling environment for their work; requests that the EU enhance its active diplomacy in third countries and strengthen the position of the human rights focal points in order to mainstream human rights in the daily political work of the EU Delegation, by systematically raising the names of political prisoners and engaging in trial monitoring and visits to prisons; stresses the need for the EU to use public diplomacy to support

human rights defenders and to call for the release of imprisoned human rights activists;

EU support for universal human rights and multilateral human rights organisations

27. Recalls the commitment of Parliament and its Subcommittee on Human Rights to supporting a strong multilateral human rights system under the aegis of the United Nations, including the Third Committee of the General Assembly, the Human Rights Council (UNHRC), the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, and the work of related UN specialised agencies such as the ILO;
28. Recalls its unequivocal position institutionalising its presence at UN General Assembly (UNGA) sessions, as expressed in its resolution of 7 February 2013 on the EU's priorities at the Human Rights Council, and considers it indispensable to continue the practice of sending a European Parliament delegation to relevant UNHRC and UNGA sessions;
29. Reiterates the importance of the EU participating actively in all UN human rights mechanisms, notably the Third Committee of the General Assembly and the UNHRC; encourages the EU Member States to do so by co-sponsoring and leading on resolutions, by actively participating in debates and interactive dialogues, and by issuing statements; strongly supports the EU's growing practice of cross-regional initiatives;
30. Stresses again the importance of effective coordination and cooperation between the EEAS, the Commission and EU Member States on human rights issues; encourages the EEAS, in particular through the EU Delegations in New York and Geneva, to increase EU coherence by means of timely and substantive consultation in order to present the EU position with one voice;
31. Reaffirms the importance of integrating the work being done in New York and Geneva in the context of the UNGA, the Third Committee and the UNHRC into the relevant internal and external activities of the EU in order to ensure coherence;

EU policy on international criminal justice and the International Criminal Court

32. Reiterates its full support for the work of the ICC in its role to end the impunity of the perpetrators of the most serious crimes of concern before the international community; remains vigilant regarding any attempts to undermine its legitimacy; considers the increasing number of states parties to be an important development in strengthening the universality of the Court; welcomes the ratification of the Rome Statute by Côte d'Ivoire in February 2013;
33. Regrets that the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court has not yet been included in the new GSP Regulation list of conventions required for GSP+ status; notes that a number of GSP+ applicants are not states parties to the Statute or have not ratified it (e.g. Armenia and Pakistan); reiterates its recommendation that the Rome Statute be added to a future list of conventions;
34. Reiterates its call for the EU to adopt a common position on the crime of aggression and the Kampala Amendments, and calls on the EU Member States to swiftly align their

national legislation with the Kampala Amendments' definitions, as well as other obligations under the Rome Statute, so as to enable national investigations and prosecutions by Member States and enhance cooperation with the Court;

EU action against the death penalty

35. Reiterates its univocal opposition to capital punishment, and encourages the European Union and the EU Member States to maintain a high-profile policy aimed at the global abolition of the death penalty; urges the EEAS to remain vigilant with regard to developments in all countries in the world, and to use all means of influence at its disposal;
36. Expresses its concern at the reported rise in the number of executions globally from 2012 to 2013, despite the fact that executions are confined to an increasingly small minority of countries; calls on the EU to take due action regarding the continuously high rate of executions in China and Iran, the resumption of executions in 2013 in Indonesia, Kuwait, Nigeria and Vietnam, as well as the marked increase in reported executions in Iraq and in Saudi Arabia;
37. Notes the revived discussion in the United States on the arbitrariness and error-prone nature of capital punishment, the campaign to stop the flow of substances used for execution from Europe to the United States, and the abolition of the death penalty in 2013 by the state of Maryland; encourages the VP/HR, the EUSR and the EEAS to engage with the US federal government and state governments in order to accelerate the demise of the death penalty in the United States, where all 80 death sentences in 2013 originated in only 2 % of the counties in the entire country, and all 39 executions took place in about 1 % of all counties;
38. Encourages the Commission to use the new flexibility now offered by the European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights in order to explore new ways to campaign for the abolition of the death penalty and to support actions aimed at avoiding death sentences or executions;

EU action against torture and other cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment or punishment

39. Urges the VP/HR and the EEAS, in the light of the increasing number of recent reports of the widespread practice of torture and abuse around the world, to step up the EU's efforts in the fight against torture and other cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment or punishment;
40. Encourages the EEAS to pay detailed attention to the country conclusions of the United Nations Committee against Torture and the Council of Europe Committee for the Prevention of Torture, and to raise these concerns systematically in political dialogues with the countries concerned as well as in public statements; calls on the EEAS and the Member States also to develop a more effective implementation plan for the EU Guidelines on torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment;

Human rights in EU trade agreements and other international agreements

41. Reiterates its call for the systematic inclusion of human rights clauses in the EU's international agreements, including trade agreements, concluded with third countries, and calls for effective monitoring of their application as well as for reporting back to the relevant committee of Parliament on the agreements' human rights aspects;

Business and human rights

42. Strongly supports the implementation of the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights; recalls the importance of promoting corporate social responsibility (CSR), including in business operations outside the EU, and ensuring its respect along the whole supply chain; is convinced that European companies and their subsidiaries and subcontractors should play a key role in the promotion and dissemination of international standards on business and human rights worldwide;
43. Requests that the Commission and the EEAS encourage EU Delegations around the world to engage with EU businesses in order to promote respect for human rights, and to ensure that 'business and human rights' is included among the focus themes in the local calls for proposals of the European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights (EIDHR);
44. Reiterates its call on the Commission to report on a regular basis on the implementation of the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights by the EU Member States, including their national action plans; regrets the lack of progress made by the Commission in following up Parliament's request that it propose legislation requiring EU companies to ensure that their purchases do not support perpetrators of conflicts or grave human rights violations;
45. Calls on the Commission and the EEAS to take strong initiatives to improve access to justice for victims of human rights violations linked to business operations outside the EU;
46. Calls on the EU to support the emerging initiatives aimed at concluding a legally binding international instrument on business and human rights within the UN system and to engage from early on in the debate on this issue;

EU action to ensure freedom of expression rights online and offline and to limit the impact of surveillance technologies on human rights

47. Recognises that the rapid evolution of information and communications technologies has transformed the environment for the exercise of freedom of expression across the world, generating both profound advantages and serious concerns; welcomes, in this context, the adoption by the Council in May 2014 of the dedicated EU Guidelines on freedom of expression online and offline;
48. Expresses its concern at the spread of monitoring and filtering technologies, which represent a growing threat to human rights and democracy activists in autocratic countries and also pose troubling questions regarding privacy rights in democratic countries, even when used with the pretext of legitimate aims such as counter-terrorism or law enforcement;

49. Commends the Commission on its publication in June 2013 of the ICT (information and communication technologies) Sector Guide on Implementing the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights; remains concerned, however, at the trade in products and services aimed at denial of internet access or enabling mass surveillance and monitoring of internet traffic and mobile communications, or at intruding on private conversations; calls, therefore, for the adoption of general export control guidelines in this sector, based on the experience of similar actions taken by the EU in individual cases;
50. Calls on the Commission to continue support initiatives related to the development and dissemination of digital security technologies in order to empower human rights defenders by providing secure collection, encryption and storage mechanisms to avoid monitoring by repressive governments;

EU support for civil society and for freedom of assembly and association

51. Expresses its serious concern over the shrinking space of legitimate civil society action in many countries around the world; considers a free civil society to be one of the foundations for the protection and support of human rights and democratic values in all societies;
52. Calls on the EU and its Member States to enhance their monitoring of, and clearly and rapidly condemn, all restrictions on freedom of assembly and association, including bans on civil society organisations, aggressive use of criminal defamation laws and other restrictive laws, excessive registration and reporting requirements, overly restrictive rules on foreign funding, or prohibitions on NGOs from engaging in political activities or having contact with foreigners;
53. Reiterates its endorsement of the majority of the funding for the EIDHR being allocated to support for human rights defenders and civil society actions around the world;

Freedom of thought, conscience, and religion or belief

54. Condemns all violence and discrimination on the basis of religion or belief; expresses its serious concern over the continued reports of violence and discrimination against religious minorities around the world; stresses that the right to freedom of thought, conscience, religion or belief, is a fundamental human right, interrelated with other human rights and fundamental freedoms, encompassing the right to believe or not to believe, the freedom to practise theistic, non-theistic or atheistic belief alike, and the right to adopt, change and abandon or return to a belief of one's choice;
55. Welcomes the adoption during the reporting year 2013 of the EU Guidelines on the promotion and protection of freedom of religion or belief, and calls on the EU institutions and the Member States to pay particular attention to the implementation of these guidelines, both in international and regional forums and in bilateral relations with third countries;

Rights of women and girls

56. Welcomes the EU's support for UN resolutions on gender issues, notably on the elimination of violence against women, on discrimination against women, on the role of freedom of expression and opinion in women's empowerment, and for the UN's statements on early and forced marriage and on female genital mutilation;
57. Calls on the EU to actively participate in the 59th session of the Commission on the Status of Women, and to continue to fight against all attempts to undermine the UN Beijing Platform for Action concerning, among other elements, access to education and health as basic human rights, and sexual and reproductive rights;
58. Reaffirms its condemnation of all forms of abuse and violence against women, especially the use of sexual violence as a weapon of war and domestic violence; calls on all Council of Europe member states, accordingly, to sign and ratify the Convention on preventing and combating violence against women; calls on the EU as such to take steps to accede to the Convention in order to ensure coherence between EU internal and external action on violence against women;
59. Strongly condemns the use of sexual violence against women as a tactic of war, including crimes such as mass rape, sexual slavery, enforced prostitution, gender-based forms of persecution including female genital mutilation, trafficking, early and forced marriages, honour killings and all other forms of sexual violence of comparable gravity; remains particularly concerned in this regard at the situation in the Great Lakes region of Africa; expresses its support for the work of UN Women, the UN Special Rapporteur on violence against women, its causes and consequences, and the UN Special Representative on Conflict-related Sexual Violence;
60. Draws attention to the fact that gender-related crimes and crimes of sexual violence are classed in the Rome Statute as war crimes, crimes against humanity or constitutive acts with respect to genocide or torture; welcomes, in this context, UN Security Council Resolution 2106 (2013) on the prevention of sexual violence in conflict, adopted on 24 June 2013, which reaffirms that the ICC plays a key role in the fight against impunity for sexual and gender-based crimes; calls on the EU to support the implementation of these principles in full;
61. Recalls the EU's commitment to the mainstreaming of human rights and gender aspects in CSDP missions in line with the landmark UN Security Council resolutions 1325 and 1820 on women, peace and security; reiterates, in this respect, its call for the EU and its Member States to support, in the process of building sustainable reconciliation, the systematic participation of women as a vital component of peace processes, and to recognise the need to mainstream gender perspectives in conflict prevention, peacekeeping operations, humanitarian assistance and post-conflict reconstruction;

Human rights and corruption

62. Recalls that corruption is a violation of human rights and that the EU has claimed an exclusive competence for the signature of the UN Convention against Corruption (UNCAC);
63. Regrets that there has been no follow-up so far on Parliament's request addressed to the

VP/HR to present an EU Action Plan against corruption in order to effectively monitor the recommendations of UNCAC, including an obligation on the states parties to publish and disseminate information on corruption, to establish channels for reporting violations, and to create a proper legal framework for the protection of witnesses and for civil society activities in this area;

64. Calls on the Commission to develop innovative financial mechanisms to implement fiscal reforms and strengthen the fight against corruption, illicit financial flows and tax evasion; encourages, in this context, consideration of public-private partnerships, the blending of grants and loans, and helping developing countries to better mobilise their domestic resources; calls for an international tax on financial transactions that could act as an additional source of funding for development, and reminds the Member States that they have already agreed to introduce a financial transaction tax domestically and undertaken to set aside a share of the funds raised to finance global public assets, including development;
65. Reiterates its call on the EU and its Member States to support the establishment of a UN Special Rapporteur on financial crime, corruption and human rights;

LGBTI rights

66. Points out that 78 countries still criminalise homosexuality, including seven which provide for the death penalty; firmly condemns the recent increase in discriminatory laws and practices and acts of violence against individuals based on their sexual orientation and gender identity, worldwide, and most notably in Nigeria and Uganda; encourages close monitoring of the situation in Nigeria, Uganda, India and Russia, where new laws or recent legal developments seriously threaten the freedom of sexual minorities; reaffirms its support for the continuing work of the High Commissioner on Human Rights to combat these discriminatory laws and practices and for the work of the UN more generally on this issue;
67. Welcomes the adoption in 2013 of the EU Guidelines to promote and protect the enjoyment of all human rights by lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex (LGBTI) persons; calls on the EEAS and the Commission to raise the issue of LGBTI rights in political and human rights dialogues with third countries and multilateral forums; emphasises the importance of the Commission and the EEAS continuing to raise the issue of LGBTI rights in political and human rights dialogues and of using the EIDHR to support organisations defending LGBTI rights by empowering them to challenge homophobic laws and discrimination against LGBTI people, raising awareness among the general public of the discrimination and violence experienced by persons of different sexual orientations, and ensuring the provision of emergency assistance (from psychosocial and medical help to mediation and reintegration assistance) to those in need of such support;
68. Welcomes the legalisation of same-sex marriage or same-sex civil unions in an increasing number of countries, seventeen at the moment, around the world; encourages the EU institutions and the Member States to further contribute to the recognition of same-sex marriage or same-sex civil union as a political, social and human and civil rights issue;

69. Welcomes the annulment in October 2013 of the Moldovan law prohibiting the ‘propagation of any other relations than those related to marriage or family’, and calls on Lithuania and Russia to follow the Moldovan example; regrets the outcome of the Croatian referendum of December 2013, which endorsed a constitutional ban on equal marriage; stresses that such referendums contribute to a climate of homophobia and discrimination; considers that LGBTI persons’ fundamental rights are more likely to be safeguarded if they have access to legal institutions such as cohabitation, registered partnership or marriage;

Rights of persons with disabilities

70. Welcomes the ratifications of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD); reiterates the importance of efficient implementation both by the Member States and the EU institutions and stresses, in particular, the need to credibly integrate the rights of persons with disabilities into all EU policy instruments, especially with regard to development cooperation;

Children’s rights

71. Welcomes the EU’s cooperation with UNICEF, which has resulted in a toolkit for the mainstreaming of children’s rights in development cooperation; welcomes the use of the Nobel Prize money awarded to the EU to assist children in conflict situations; welcomes the EU’s participation in the October 2013 Third Global Conference on Child Labour held in Brasilia, and its participation in the negotiation of the tripartite declaration on child labour;
72. Calls on the Commission and the EEAS to continue to take action regarding the rights of the child, with a specific focus on violence against children, including torture, as cases of torture and detention of children have been reported by organisations such as UNICEF and Amnesty International; calls for particular focus on the issues of forced child labour, child marriage, enlistment of children in armed groups and their disarmament, rehabilitation and subsequent reintegration, as well as placing the issue of child witchcraft on the agenda of human rights dialogues with the countries concerned; stresses the importance of prioritising children’s rights within EU external policy;
73. Reiterates the need to step up efforts to implement the Revised Implementation Strategy of the EU Guidelines on Children and Armed Conflict; encourages the EU to further deepen its cooperation with the UN Special Representative for Children affected by Armed Conflicts; calls for the universal ratification of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, and notably the third Optional Protocol which will allow children to submit their complaints to the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child;

EU action on migration and refugees

74. Stresses the urgent need to develop stronger policies at Union level to address the pressing issues related to migrants, refugees and asylum seekers in a manner consistent with international human rights law and fundamental human dignity, and calls on the EU to guarantee effective common standards for reception procedures throughout the Union in order to protect the most vulnerable; invites the VP/HR, the Commissioner for

Migration and Home Affairs and the EEAS to promote a true spirit of cooperation and equitable burden-sharing among Member States in order to tackle the multiple challenges that persist in this regard; recalls the commitment of the Commission to developing adequate legal migration channels, and, to this end, calls for a revision of the Dublin Regulation, which places disproportionate responsibility on Member States for the Union's external borders and hinders migrants' ability to seek and obtain asylum;

75. Requests that the Commission and the EEAS participate actively in the debate on the term 'climate refugee', including its possible legal definition in international law or in any legally binding international agreement;

Human rights and development

76. Calls for concerted EU action to address the problem of land-grabbing; notes that the denial of access to land and natural resources to the rural and urban poor is one of the key causes of hunger and poverty in the world, thereby having an impact on the local communities' enjoyment of their human rights, and particularly on their right to adequate food; welcomes the EU's involvement in the development of the voluntary global guidelines on tenure of land, fisheries and forests, adopted under the aegis of the UN; emphasises, nevertheless, the urgent need to mainstream human rights and poverty reduction considerations in decision-making regarding the acquisition or long-term lease of large areas of land by investors; considers the EU's response to this issue to be an important test of its commitment to move toward a rights-based approach in its development cooperation policy;

Enhancing the European Parliament's actions on human rights

77. Reiterates its commitment to the continued improvement of Parliament's own procedures, processes and structures in order to ensure that human rights and democracy are at the core of its actions and policies; considers, furthermore, that effective Parliament-wide cooperation and mainstreaming of human rights is required for the Subcommittee on Human Rights to fulfil its mission, as specified in the Rules of Procedure, to 'ensure coherence between all the Union's external policies and its human rights policy';
78. Calls for a review of the Guidelines for the European Parliament's Interparliamentary Delegations on promoting human rights and democracy, to be conducted by the Conference of Delegation Chairs, in cooperation with the Subcommittee on Human Rights; recommends, in this context, a more systematic practice of raising human rights issues, especially the individual cases referred to in Parliament's resolutions, during delegation visits to third countries, and of reporting on actions taken to the Subcommittee on Human Rights in writing, and, where politically warranted, through a specific debriefing session;
79. Emphasises the need for continued reflection regarding the most appropriate ways to maximise the credibility, visibility and effectiveness of Parliament's resolutions on breaches of human rights, democracy and the rule of law;
80. Encourages discussion on the inclusion of the different tools available to Parliament

regarding support for and promotion of human rights in a single strategy document, to be adopted by Parliament at a plenary session;

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81. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission, the Vice-President of the Commission / High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, the EU Special Representative for Human Rights, the governments and parliaments of the Member States, the UN Security Council, the UN Secretary-General, the President of the 69th UN General Assembly, the President of the UN Human Rights Council, the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, and the EU Heads of Delegation.