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Civil society networks welcome European Parliament position on the future EU development cooperation with Latin America

Civil society networks ALOP, APRODEV, CIDSE, CIFCA, GRUPO SUR and ODHACO welcome the European Parliament (EP) resolution of 12 June 2012 on defining new development cooperation with Latin America.¹ In a region where 180 million people - one in three persons - live below the poverty line, it is paramount that the EU take due consideration of the widespread poverty and inequality when defining its development cooperation.

In particular we support the following recommendations of the EP and urge that they be effectively included within the Development Cooperation Instrument (DCI):

1. **Broaden the indicators used for differentiation** to include also the poverty, vulnerability and ECHO crisis index, and the Gini and inequality coefficients. Based on those indicators, **the EU should continue its bilateral cooperation under the future DCI with Colombia, Ecuador and Peru.**
2. **Integrate social cohesion more efficiently in the DCI, including it in the strategies for gradual withdrawal of bilateral aid**, focusing especially on the co-financing of policies and programmes to reduce inequality.
3. **Include the role of civil society as a priority** in the DCI and subsequently in country and regional programming, “thus highlighting its decisive role in the fight against inequality, corruption and the scrutiny of the use of financial resources”. The networks consider fundamental to support enabling environment for civil society organisations and strengthen the dialogue on the increased criminalisation of social protest in Latin America, addressing also its economic, social and environmental causes.
4. **Ensure civil society participation within** the structure of Latin American Investment Facility (LAIF). Establish effective rules for **transparent decision-making on the selection of projects. Ensure the support for small and medium-sized enterprises**, especially “small scale and local energy and agricultural production, in coherence with the European Consensus on Development, the principle of ownership and the EU’s commitment to untie its aid”.
5. **Establish concrete mechanisms to plan and monitor Policy Coherence for Development policies.** The resolution “underlines that the links between growth, trade, development and poverty reduction are neither simple nor automatic”.
6. **Focus the security and justice related cooperation on the promotion of human rights and the fight against impunity. Sharpen the dialogue on the increased violence against women, in particular femicide**, including a more efficient strategy that will tackle its’ economic, social and political causes.

¹ European Parliament resolution of 12 June 2012 (2011/2286(INI)),
http://www.europarl.europa.eu/intcoop/eurolat/key_documents/coop_dev_with_la_en.pdf

The civil society networks recall that, in order for these and other EP recommendations to become reality on the ground, it is necessary to revise the accountability mechanisms within the Commission DCI proposal. This is particularly important considering that, while the EP and the member states have just initiated the discussions on the DCI, the European Commission and the European External Action Services are already carrying out country level programming.