

Resolution on the role of Science and Technology co-operation between the EU and developing countries. STOA-IRD Conference, European Parliament, 4 March 2009

Whereas Science and Technology (S&T) cooperation can not only help to achieve specific Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), but can contribute significantly to socio-economic progress more generally and whereas it is important to align EU S&T co-operation policies with EU foreign policy and development aid programmes,

Whereas so far S&T and innovation have not received sufficient attention and their results have been under-utilised in the international development agenda and whereas it is necessary to refocus development policies towards key areas of new S&T knowledge within development agencies and developing countries alike,

Whereas, on the other hand, chronic underinvestment in higher education, and S&T has, in many cases, limited the ability of developing countries to make progress towards the MDGs and more generally,

Whereas it is fundamental to collaborate with developing countries, and to enhance their ability to produce, access, comprehend, select, adapt, and use S&T knowledge since this will strongly influence their material well-being and quality of life,

This meeting calls on the Commission, the Member States and the private sector to increase their support for the different S&T partnerships with developing countries; calls, in this regard, for the mobilisation of global S&T for the MDGs by putting the emphasis on higher education, business opportunities for the private sector, S&T infrastructure and S&T advice for developing countries, including greater public engagement with S&T,

Further calls on the Commission and the Member States to support the area of capacity building as the foundation of S&T by focusing on the training of researchers, (especially African), officials from public administrations and, in particular, those responsible for designing, programming and implementing S&T policies; calls, therefore, on the Commission and the Member States to accompany these measures with new specific measures to avoid the "brain drain" that affects S&T sectors in developing countries, and support for the development of S&T infrastructures;

Notes the importance of accessible and affordable high bandwidth electronic communications for the sharing of research knowledge, the evolution of research communities and the development of digital technology; commends the role already played by the EU in this field and encourages further investment to enhance this capability;

Acknowledges the role of the Commission and Member States in supporting S&T partnerships; taking note of the European & Developing Countries Clinical Trials Partnership (EDCTP) projects, stress the opportunities offered by the article 169 to pooling efforts, avoid duplication and increase impacts of such important projects and urges continuing, long term, predictable policies to overcome the multiple challenges of developing countries, including poverty related diseases and other major concerns;,

Stresses that, in the context of financial and economic crisis, these efforts to support S&T partnerships are even more necessary in order to allow developing countries to confront the global challenges, including poverty, climate change, food security and health for all,

Calls on the Commission and Member States to initiate, implement and support measures to improve the level of participation of scientists from developing countries in international collaborative science and S&T projects and to promote investment in global public knowledge goods in order to achieve sustainable development and to promote access to intellectual property and entrusts it world-wide;

Recognises the valuable contributions of: the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), the S&T Consolidated Plan of Action for Africa, the African Regional Action Plan on the Knowledge Economy (ARAPKE), and finally the recent S&T partnership between Africa and the EU concluded in the framework of the Africa-EU Strategic agreement. Consequently, calls for a better implementation of this latter through the relevant measures and instruments to be improved;

Encourages the EU to negotiate similar strategic partnerships agreements in the field of S&T with other regions of the world.