

Thursday, 15 November 2007 - Strasbourg

Situations of fragility

Ana Maria Gomes, on behalf of the PSE Group. - (PT) In fragile states the link between governance, development and security is paramount. The EU must determine strategic priorities for relations with those states with human security as the overall goal.

It is not enough to support government institutions. It is essential to promote the strengthening of parliamentary scrutiny, to support free and pluralist media, the independence of the judiciary and the empowerment of civil society, giving priority to women, vulnerable groups and minorities. That requires commitment on the part of the EU.

Somalia today tragically illustrates the aloofness of Europe. The causes of fragility that stir up violent conflict, exacerbating the incapacity of the state - bad governance, extreme poverty or violations of human rights, for example - must be broached in bilateral dialogue and often the Council, Commission and Member States fail to do that. The causes of fragility must be taken into account in defining strategies and in the globalisation of the EU's financial instruments. Development aid must be focused on people and direct financial support for governments should be considered only when there is proof of commitment to resolving conflicts, to building the democratic rule of law and to improving governance and the human security of the peoples.

Finally, and unfortunately this aspect is omitted from the Commission's Communication and the resolution we are to vote on, the EU must invest more, alongside DDR and SSR programmes, in controlling global transfers of light weapons, since they fuel armed conflicts which perpetuate the fragility of many states.