

Committee on Development
 Por determinação de Sua Excelência a
 Presidente da C. D. 2º Comissão
Conhecimentos a 4ª Comissão
 14.07.2011

Subcommittee on Human Rights

To the Chair of the Committee concerned

Assembleia da República Gabinete da Presidente
Subject: Nº de Entrada <u>401356</u>
Classificação _/_/_/_/_/
Data <u>16/07/2011</u>

Invitation to an inter-parliamentary committee meeting of the European Parliament's Committee on Development and the Subcommittee on Human Rights with national Parliaments of the European Union's Member States on the issue of human rights conditionality in development policy

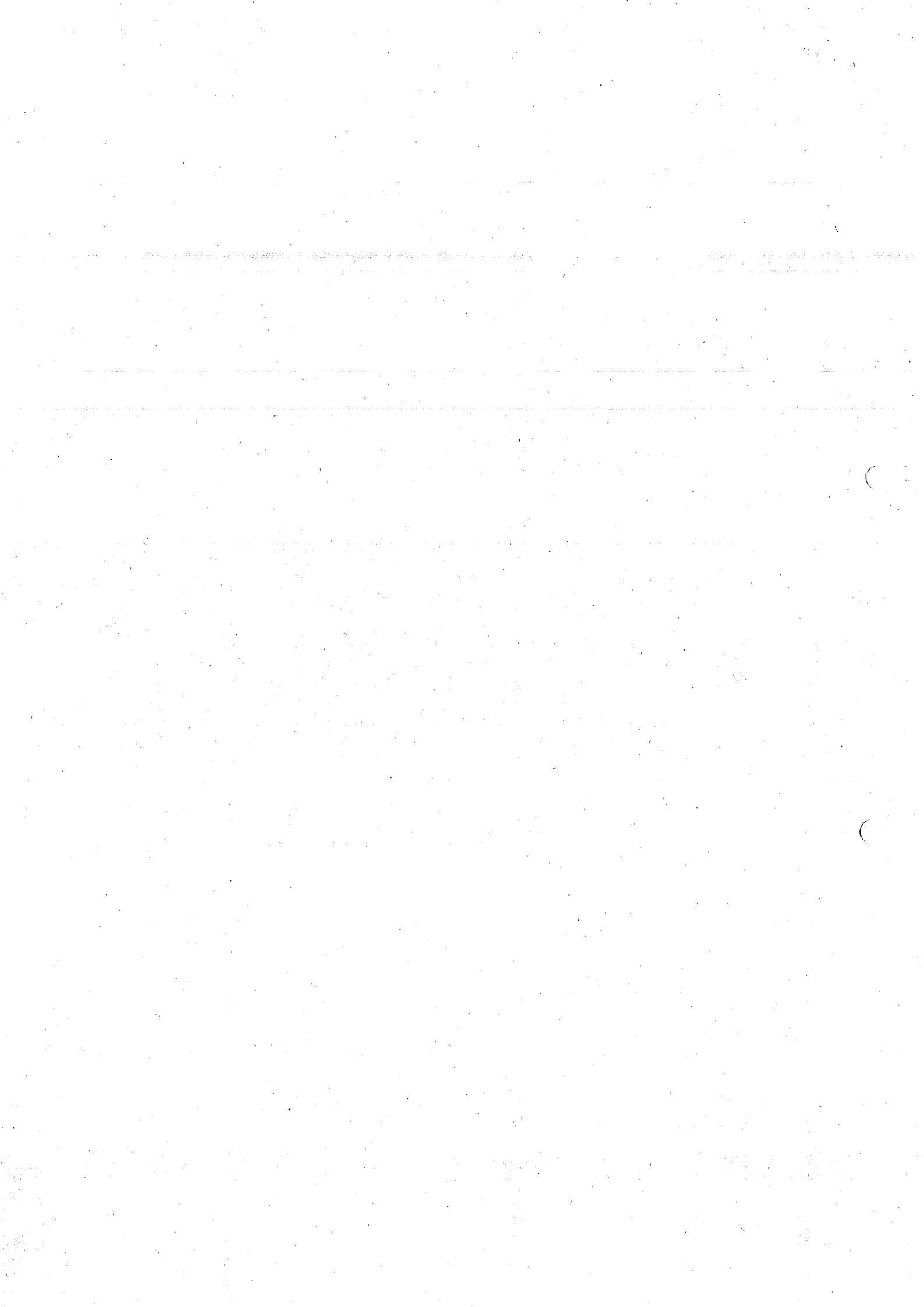
Dear Chair, dear colleague,

On behalf of our respective committees, we are honoured to invite a number of Members of national Parliaments to an inter-parliamentary committee meeting on the issue of **human rights conditionality in development policy**. The meeting will take place on 11 October from 15h00 to 18h30 in the European Parliament in Brussels.

The last decades have witnessed the adoption of policies on human rights in the majority of bilateral and multilateral aid institutions, including the European Commission. In the UN system this human rights mainstreaming has resulted in a 2003 agreement on an interagency common understanding of a human rights-based approach to development programming, in which the relationship between development cooperation, the Universal Declaration on Human Rights and international human rights instruments is highlighted. Article 21 of the Treaty on European Union also explicitly stipulates that "the Union's action on the international scene shall be guided by the principles which have inspired its own creation", including "democracy, the rule of law, the universality and indivisibility of human rights and fundamental freedoms". Human rights are thus conceived both as an objective in their own right and as contributing to improving the quality and effectiveness of development assistance.

A recent study commissioned by the European Parliament¹ found that "the EU frequently imposes sanctions on countries that violate human rights and democratic principles in third countries. It does this most frequently within the context of the Common Foreign and Security Policy (...). Additionally, the EU conditions economic benefits which it provides to third countries on the compliance of those countries with human rights and democratic principles. This practice of conditionality takes two main forms. On the one hand, the EU disposes of a range of conditionality clauses permitting the withdrawal of privileges in the event that the beneficiary country violates human rights and democratic principles. On the other, in the area of trade preferences, the EU provides positive incentives to countries that comply with human rights (and other) norms".

¹ The application of human rights conditionality in the EU's bilateral trade agreements and other trade arrangements with third countries (2008)



The meeting will be organised around two consecutive sessions dealing with the problems posed by these considerations for the implementation of cooperation programmes, and the ways and means adopted by the European Commission and the Member States to integrate and harmonise human rights and development.

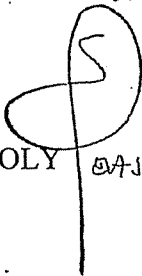
The meeting will be preceded by an official lunch offered by the European Parliament to participants.

As is customary, the present invitation is open to four Members of the competent committee(s) of each parliamentary Assembly (two for each Chamber in the case of bicameral parliaments).

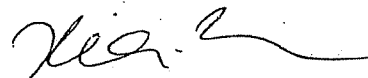
The draft programme of the meeting and more detailed practical information for the event will be forwarded to you shortly by the representative of your national Parliament in charge of relations with the European Parliament. In the meantime, please find enclosed a preliminary draft programme for your consideration.

We look forward to personally welcoming you in October and to a fruitful debate.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a large, stylized letter 'S' with a vertical line extending downwards from its base.

Eva JOLY
Chair

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Heidi' followed by a long, sweeping horizontal line.

Heidi HAUTALA
Chair

Annex