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- Search for Common Ground
- Terre des Hommes international federation
- World Coalition against Death Penalty
- World Organisation Against Torture
- World Vision

The future of the European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights in the context of the new EU Multiannual Financial Framework 2014-2020

“The Union’s action on the international scene shall be guided by the principles which have inspired its own creation, development and enlargement, and which it seeks to advance in the wider world: 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 and international law.”

Article 21 Treaty of the European Union

HRDN position – June 2013

The Human Rights and Democracy Network (HRDN) is concerned with the future of the EU financing instrument for the promotion of democracy and human rights worldwide (EIDHR). As trilogues on the new EIDHR Regulation are ongoing, HRDN would like to assert some important issues from the point of view of civil society organisations involved in democracy and human rights promotion.

The EIDHR should continue to support the development and consolidation of human rights, democracy and the rule of law worldwide by working predominantly with and through civil society organisations. The EIDHR should continue to defend the fundamental freedoms which form the basis for all democratic processes and to help civil society to become an effective force for democratic political reform and protection of human rights.

HRDN believes that the EIDHR should work with a wide range of partners including international parliamentary associations, grass-roots organisations, political and multi-party foundations, trade unions, watchdog organisations and the media, as long as those actors pursue a clear mission and implement relevant programs to promote the implementation of international human rights standards and support democratic transformation processes. HRDN believes that the future EIDHR should continue to exclude direct and indirect funding to political parties in order to ensure a non-partisan approach.

Complementarity with other existing geographic and thematic instruments (in particular the Instrument for Stability and the European Development Fund) should continue to be sought to enhance the added value of the EIDHR’s specific features.

Coordination with newly created instruments in support of democracy, such as the European Endowment for Democracy (EED), should be ensured in order to avoid any overlap, double funding or diversion of resources, while seeking to create synergies that can engender a multiplier effect for EIDHR funding on the one hand, and on the other hand to maintain the maximum flexibility of the instrument. **HRDN is not in favour of preferential beneficiary arrangements for the EED which would take away funding from the Country Based Support Schemes.**

The Human Rights and Democracy Network (HRDN) is an informal grouping of NGOs operating at EU level in the broader areas of human rights, democracy and conflict prevention. Participation in the network is open to non-governmental organizations which engage at EU level in the promotion of human rights, democracy and conflict prevention in and outside the EU.

The vision of the HRDN is that human rights and democracy are placed at the heart of the EU's internal and external policy agenda. This vision should manifest itself in a EU that effectively protects human rights at home and is a force for positive change in the world. In pursuit of this vision, the network aims to influence EU and member state human rights policies and the programming of their funding instruments to promote democracy, human rights and sustainable peace.

EIDHR should channel democracy support increasingly through civil society and set a ceiling for the amount of funding that can be earmarked for Election Observation Missions (EOMs). EOMs funded under EIDHR should be organised only where they have a demonstrated added-value and responding to a clear long term strategy that sustains the ownership of local actors over the entire electoral observation cycle – including the period prior to and after elections.

Finally, HRDN would like to stress that consultation with civil society on the preparation of the Strategy Papers setting out priorities for financing by the Union during the period of validity of the new Regulation should take place in a genuine, timely and inclusive manner. This is to ensure that priorities correspond to the international situation, the activities of the main partners and the needs of targeted beneficiaries in third countries.

On behalf of HRDN

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