



5th May 2010

Dear President Barroso, High Representative Ashton and Commissioner Piebalgs,

Your personal commitment and joint leadership have combined to ensure that international development has been recognised as a priority in planning for the European External Action Service. On 26 April, the Foreign Affairs Council agreed a framework for the EAS which recognises the importance of international development, and the focus on poverty reduction enshrined in the Lisbon Treaty. The framework gives the new EU diplomatic service a role in shaping strategy and in programming development cooperation programmes, for all regions of the world; grants an oversight role to the Development Commissioner; and preserves a strong aid agency, in the form of EuropeAid. The framework also provides development with clear opportunities to play a strong role in helping to build more coherent EU external action, while at the same time reconfirming the Union's commitment to global poverty reduction and global environmental sustainability. This is in line with the recent 'Spring Package' on the Millennium Development Goals, which evidences your support for higher levels of aid and for development friendly measures on tax, finance, trade and migration. We very much hope that the Council and Heads of State endorse the proposals.

In implementing the agreement reached, speed is now of the essence. A crowded timetable of international processes lies ahead, including the G8 and G20, the UN Summit on the Millennium Development Goals, and the Cancun meeting on climate change.

For development to be able to play its essential role in shaping more coherent EU global action, the European Think-Tanks Group considers the main challenges to be four:

- First, ensure that the EAS is properly staffed on the development side. This means a Director General responsible for development, supported by his or her own strategic policy staff and with authority over the development units transferred into the EAS from other parts of the Commission. The Director General should be fully responsible for results-oriented planning and for taking the necessary measures to ensure policy coherence for development (PCD);
- Second, protect the capacity of the Development Commissioner and of the institutions he or she manages. In particular, EuropeAid will need the breadth and depth to manage a €11 billion aid programme. It is not now and should not

become simply a mechanical administration for delivery of decisions taken elsewhere;

- Third, preserve the participation of developing countries themselves in setting frameworks and programming development cooperation. Programming mandates must not become the exclusive preserve of EAS officials, even those in the development wing. Instead, the EAS, DG Development and EuropeAid should work together to embed policy and programming as close to the field as possible; and should make full use in all countries of the type of partnership pioneered in ACP countries; and
- Fourth, put in place appropriate accountability to the European Parliament, engaging both the foreign affairs and development committees, along with others dealing with trade, environment and other items linked to policy coherence.

In the best case, these last decisions you make on the formation of the EAS will create a new development architecture that truly delivers strategic action that contributes decisively to achieving a strong and coherent EU external action, while respecting its commitment to development objectives. We urge you to take full advantage of the opportunity.

Yours sincerely,



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