

The European Union's development agenda in 2005/2006

Maintaining consistency between words and deeds

"The failure to pursue a comprehensive integrated approach to development will perpetuate the inequality predicament, for which everyone pays the price"

**Jose Antonio Ocampo,
UN Under-Secretary-General**

The past two years emphasis to tackling world poverty has been welcome. Stimulated by key international events in 2005, particularly the World Summit to review the implementation of the 2000 Millennium Declaration and the Millennium Development Goals, as well as by actions of citizens across the world in the Global Call for Action Against Poverty, this focus has given prominence to Europe's co-operation with developing countries and their people. However, while much has been done to stimulate development in poor countries, there is general recognition that these efforts fall far short of what is needed if the modest goals established by the Millennium Summit are to be achieved.

The European Union, which seeks to give leadership in promoting global sustainable development, must not only ensure that its commitments are honoured, but that they are also built upon. This is all the more important after 2005's high profile poverty focused events have ended and attention turns to other things. With the repeated warnings that development targets will not be met, that globalisation is widening inequalities, and that global warming could increase climatic instability more action is required to address these issues, not less.

The following pages set out what is needed over the coming months if a Responsible Europe is to be realised.

1. The leaders of European Union and its Member States must deliver on their promises made in the context of the 2005 World Summit

The commitment to global solidarity by Europe's leaders, and growing public support for development in the EU, has positioned the 25 nation bloc as a leader in working to achieve the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), thus making them central to European development policy. Continued support by European representatives at the 2005 World Summit ensured that they were properly reflected in the final declaration of the Summit. And while the final outcome of the Summit was disappointing in many aspects, the new commitments made by the European Union and its Member States provide a lead to other industrialised nations to strengthen their commitments in the struggle for the establishment of a fairer world.

Over the coming months Europe's commitments need to be translated into reality. Nice words alone will not diminish inequalities in the world. Europe must demonstrate strong and decisive leadership in implementing common international commitments made at the 2005 World Summit and in other UN conferences and Summits, as well as the implementation of its own commitments announced in New York. In this way Europe can respond to the expectations held by people living in poverty in many different parts of the world.

2. The new European Development Policy statement must provide a policy framework appropriate to the challenges of poverty eradication.

While recognising the cultural, historical and linguistic diversity in today's world, the EU's development objective included in its new Development Policy Statement should be to **ensure that its developing partners have the ability to decide upon their own development strategies and objectives**. This statement should also recognize that the **partnership with civil society** and grass roots movements has a crucial role to play in ensuring that partners' development strategies reflect priorities identified by all the sectors of their society.

For the past decade, Europe's Development policy has been centred on the fight against poverty. The renewed statement should reconfirm this objective and clarify that it will apply to the EU's cooperation with all developing countries. However, this objective is not sufficient. The renewed statement should go beyond development policy and **initiate changes to Europe's trade, security, agriculture, fisheries and migration policies to ensure that these stop being detrimental to the establishment of a fairer world** in which injustices and inequalities are abolished, women empowered, human rights respected and the environment protected.

A recent UN report¹ has highlighted the fact that globalisation has increased inequalities. Europe's statement on Development Policy should challenge the current direction of globalisation by questioning the unequal distribution of wealth and power around the world today. The statement should lead Europe towards increased efforts to share part of its wealth with developing countries, including by **setting up innovative mechanisms to finance development**. The renewed statement should also recognise the need to engage in the fight to **democratise international institutions**, in particular with a view to ensuring the effective accountability of the World Bank, the IMF and the WTO within the UN system.

This revision of the policy statement provides opportunities to define a stronger European political commitment for ensuring effective strategies are put in place, including **mechanisms for the programming, implementation and evaluation stages of EU assistance, which can consistently and systematically address gender issues**. This will require increased

¹ United Nations "Report on the World Social Situation 2005"

dedicated capacity within the Commission, improved parliamentary scrutiny and a higher degree of women movements' participation in development processes.

3. Europeans must turn their words into reality by allocating significant resources to the EU budget for development, poverty eradication and strategies for diminishing inequality in the years 2007-2013.

The level of funding available for the EU's external relations and more specifically for development co-operation in the years 2007-2013 should reflect Europe's ambition to become a constructive global player in the new world order. **Resources available for development cooperation and humanitarian aid must increase over the lifetime of the next Financial Perspective** if Europe is to take up its responsibility towards the developing world by making a significant contribution to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals.

4. The legal and regulatory framework governing Europe's co-operation with developing countries must be consistent with commitments made by its representatives in various international fora

The Union's regulatory framework must be compatible and consistent with its objectives, commitments and policies towards developing countries. In particular:

An instrument for poverty eradication in all developing countries.

There should be an instrument centred on the eradication of poverty based on the legal basis for development of the Treaty (article 179 TEC) in which the attainment of the Millennium Development Goals are at the core. It needs to preserve and strengthen the role of the European Parliament and the Council in defining priorities in co-operation with developing countries.

An instrument for the cooperation with Europe's neighbours.

This instrument should make **specific provision for developing countries in Europe's neighbourhood²**, based on the objectives defined in the legal basis for development of the treaty (Article 179 TEC) and the new Statement on Development Policy.

An instrument for stability.

It should allow the EU to address crisis in developing countries in a comprehensive manner with the objective to re-establish the conditions for effective development cooperation. Actions being performed in developing countries under this instrument must have a **long-term development perspective instead of short-term security goals such as the fight against terrorism**. They should aim at serving the legal basis for development of the treaty and the new Statement on Development Policy

5. The development and implementation of policies to promote gender equality must be prioritised in EU's relations with developing countries

Women and children constitute a majority of the world's poor. They are regularly exposed to various types of violence and discrimination, and often lack the opportunities, rights and obligations which men enjoy in all spheres of life. At the same time local communities depend on women for basic necessities, for care of the most vulnerable and for ensuring cohesion at community level.

² According to the internationally recognised classification of the Development Assistance Committee (DAC) of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), more than 70% of the countries covered by the proposed European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument regulation are developing countries.

Strategies to eradicate poverty cannot succeed without the effective promotion of gender equality and this must be reflected in the EU's policies and practices in its relations with developing countries.

Europe must therefore ensure that the **policy, programming, implementation and evaluation stages of its assistance to developing countries consistently and systematically address gender issues**. It must recognise the specific vulnerability of women in conflict situations, as well as the unique role they can play as positive agents of change in society.

6. Europe must take its global environmental responsibility

We have a collective responsibility to preserve our world for future generations. This responsibility is increasing over time. The sustainable use of natural resources and nature conservation are interconnected with tackling both poverty eradication and social inequalities. Today climate change is an increasing threat to communities around the world. Those most threatened by the consequences of global warming and climate change are those already most vulnerable - particularly marginalized communities and people living in poverty. The leadership Europe has shown in promoting the ratification of the Kyoto protocol must continue through a demonstrable commitment to effectively addressing, local, regional and global ecological issues in a timely, determined and decisive way based on precautionary principles.

The EU must **develop mechanisms for ensuring effective environmental mainstreaming** in all its actions. Measures should be taken to ensure that high quality environmental integration takes place throughout programming, implementation and evaluation stages of EU assistance. Commission services should be properly staffed, structured and trained to ensure that both programming and implementation benefit from effective environmental integration. At the same time, the EU must work within the international community to secure global commitments for a sustainable future.

7. Europe's social policies are an important foundation for external co-operation

The social dimension of Europe's policy framework is a crucial basis on which it has built its co-operation with other parts of the world. These policies - based on recognition of the need to diminish inequalities within society, and in the context of the European Union as a whole between different parts of the Union - have sought to ensure affordable access to basic services for all, and the provision of the means to a meaningful standard of life. Ensuring there is good quality education for all children, as well as the availability of affordable higher education and vocation training is fundamental to achieving this objective. Seeking to ensure that there are employment opportunities and decent work for all is also central, where such opportunities are meaningful, are not exploitative and do not discriminate on grounds of gender, race, religion, sexual orientation, age, disability, etc.

After the recent commitments made during the World Summit, the Europe Union must now demonstrate that it can keep its word by leading the fight for a fairer world. It has the necessary resources, power and backing from its citizens to contribute significantly to achieving the changes needed in the world, and in global governance for that to happen. It can work to ensure that people's rights are respected wherever they live in the world and demonstrate that assuring people's security does not need these rights to be compromised. Indeed Europe can even inspire the World by demonstrating that the respect for the right to development, the right to a livelihood, the right to health and the international rule of law is fundamental to the establishment of a more secure world.