

**COSAC : "Contributing to Development" Speech**  
**Monday, 24th June 2013, 2 :45 p.m.**  
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Good afternoon Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am delighted to be with you today for the 49th Conference of European Affairs Committees of the national Parliaments of the EU and to be discussing issues of common interest with my fellow EU parliamentarians.

I would like to thank the Irish Presidency of the Council for putting development - a key component of the EU external action- on the agenda of our discussions.

In September 2000, the United Nations adopted the Millennium Declaration, before establishing specific goals and dates for achieving them by 2015. Significant progress has been achieved in developing Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and I want to emphasize this point because we tend to focus only on failures.

However, two years from the deadline, much remains to be done. Everywhere in the world, people still suffer from poverty hunger, inequalities and safety. 1.3 billion people are estimated to be still living in extreme poverty.

On 30<sup>th</sup> May last, The High-Level Panel studying the post-2015 programme presented a report, which is the starting point of a UN consultation process on Post-MDGs.

I wish to stress the fact that it is a general framework that goes beyond old paradigmatic antagonisms opposing "public-private" and "north-south".

This observation is supported by two facts : First of all, the world is less and less reliant on Official Development Assistance (ODA) (85% of financial flows from developed countries to developing countries come from the private sector, while 15% come from ODA).

Besides, partner countries need to play a more proactive role, to adapt the new framework to their national priorities. They will therefore have to use their budgets responsibly and create an environment encouraging economic development and private investment.

In addition, I believe it is vital for partner countries to implement an efficient and fair mechanisms of tax collection. The European Commission *Agenda for Change* regarding the impact of its development policy recommends strengthening that area as a condition for EU budget support.

As for development aid, it does not just support development strategies because, it is only through economic growth, if twinned with a fair redistribution of wealth, that we can ensure an effective and sustainable fight against poverty.

The financial resources needed to address the challenges facing poor countries are quite substantial and largely exceeds the Official Development Assistance (ODA) growth prospects. Hence the need to combine Official Development Assistance (ODA) with a medium-term and long-term economic policy in order to create the conditions for private sector development and integration of developing countries on the global market.

The stakes are high: 1,000 billion investment are expected in developing countries between 2015 and 2030.

This issue requires full commitment from The European Union with a coordinated position on the September 2013? MDGs Special Event preparation process.

Under the Monterrey Consensus on development financing, the EU committed to collectively dedicate 0.7% of their gross national income to development aid by 2015. But the strain of economic and financial recession and budget cuts in the EU has triggered a decrease in official development assistance flows.

My dear fellow parliamentarians, it is regrettable that most EU Member States are a long way off the track towards meeting their international commitments in dedicating 0.7% of their gross national income to development aid by 2015. As parliamentarians, we must condemn the non-fulfilment of the commitments.

Nevertheless, Europe supplies nearly 55% aid and represents the world's biggest donor with 53 billion euro in 2011.

The present economic downturn hitting the EU should not be let hinder the progress we have achieved so far. We need to build on the achievements made up to now.

Furthermore, Bill GATES, who recently came to the European Parliament, gave concrete evidence of the extent of the EU achievements by saving lives and improving those of the poorest. Let me give you an example: Malaria is a disease that we can eradicate. Progress to fight it has been significant thanks to EU contributions. Decreasing the funding would imply suppressing the current progress.

In addition, in the light of these tough times, it is all the more essential to ensure an effective aid expenditure and with better results. The European Commission *Agenda for Change* follows this approach. To achieve complete efficiency, the EU and its

Member States must speak with a single voice and “deliver as one” in order to obtain better results.

As for the 2014-2020 financial prospects, the EU Member States agreed, at the 8<sup>th</sup> of February Council, to operate a 10% cut on the global budget amount initially planned by the European Commission. Heading 4 of this budget, "the EU as a global partner" – which includes development aid and humanitarian aid- underwent a severe 16.1% cut compared with the Commission's initial proposal. That means that the amount decreased from 70 billion for 2014 -2020 to 58.7 billion following the decision of the Member States.

The Council also granted 26.98 billion euro to the 11<sup>th</sup> European Development Fund (EDF) for 2014-2020, compared to 30.3 billion as suggested by the European Commission.

It is essential that the adopted global amounts, both for the 11th EDF (outside budget) and the Development Co-operation Instrument (within the EU budget) enable the EU to meet its commitment to set aside 0.7% of its GDP for development aid by 2015.

In fact, the European Parliament rejected this agreement in its current form.

The Parliament and the Irish Presidency are currently negotiating and I can assure you that my colleagues from the Committee on Development and myself are doing our outmost for the development and humanitarian budgets to fulfil the EU challenges and commitments. We cannot accept a further budget cut.

The Agenda for Change, which I mentioned earlier, introduces the concept of differentiation at the heart of the European development policy. According to that principle, in the future, The EU will target its development aid to the poorest countries. The EU will thus have a differentiated approach for the aid modalities and partnerships to maximise aid impact and efficiency.

The aid fragmentation and proliferation are still widespread and even tend to increase. A joint programming of EU and MS assistance would help reduce its fragmentation and increase its impact and efficiency. This is an essential but sensitive issue because the Member States do not favour this system and would rather retain their full visibility.

Ladies and Gentlemen, the EU is also the largest donor of humanitarian aid in the world. Humanitarian aid is a moral imperative and is the fundamental expression of the EU solidarity and values. Humanitarian disasters and needs keep increasing, mainly due to climate change. The 2014 – 2020 financial prospects are also alarming and the budget is feared not to meet the needs of the victims of disasters.

I would like to conclude on a positive note: According to the 2012 Eurobarometer, European citizens massively support the European humanitarian aid despite the economic recession and the substantial pressure on public finances.

Thank you very much.