



***International Conference on European Development Aid after 2015 -  
Round-table on “Future Prospects – EU development policy post-2015”.***

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Excellencies, distinguished participants, ladies and gentlemen,

It is a great pleasure for me to be here with you today to mark the European Year for Development and discuss the future of development policy post-2015. In January this year, I had the privilege to participate in the launch of the European Year for Development in Riga, Latvia. Under the motto "Our world, our dignity, our future", we committed to make 2015 a special year, as the first ever European Year to demonstrate the role of Europe in the world. It is the year which inspired more Europeans to get engaged and involved in development. And it is the year which

inspired the whole world to think more about people, planet and prosperity.

Today -- nine months later -- we come together following a historic moment for the whole world: the United Nations Sustainable Development Summit that was held in New York last month. In a world beset by so many challenges, problems and disputes, it was a sign of hope that 193 world leaders gathered to adopt a new vision for the future well-being of all humankind. At the heart of this new vision are the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs): 17 bold yet achievable goals that aim to end poverty, fight inequality, tackle climate change and build peaceful societies by the year 2030.

Why do these 17 goals matter?

First of all, because the SDGs are the people's agenda. They are the result of the most open and transparent consultation process in the history of the United Nations. We reached out to 8.5 million of individuals, community organizations, businesses, scientists, academics and, most importantly, to the poor and the most disadvantaged groups of people. In our region, 15 countries engaged in this global consultation

both on the new sustainable development agenda and the approaches for its implementation. This vision of millions of people was translated into an international commitment to make our world better for the present and future generations.

Secondly, today's world is interconnected in a way it has never been before. As an example, the future of the EU, its member states, and their citizens, is closely linked to the state of the global economy, global ecosystems, and global peace and stability. All countries need economies that generate jobs and opportunities. We need societies and political systems that are more inclusive and cohesive. We need healthy ecosystems. And we need peace and human security. Sustainable development plays a major role in advancing all these ends. Development aid ensures countries – especially those in greatest need – have the ability to pursue sustainable growth and development.

Last month's UN Sustainable Development Summit is one of a series of big international summits and conferences taking place this and next year.

- The Third UN World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction, which took place in March in Sendai, Japan, put together the global agenda on that issue for the next generation.
- The sustainable development and disaster risk reduction agendas will come together in the major UN climate change conference, COP 21, in Paris at the end of the year, where a new global treaty is due to be agreed.
- The World Humanitarian Summit, to be held in Istanbul in May 2016, will bring the global community together to commit to new ways of working together to save lives and reduce hardship around the globe.

What are the chances, however, for any of these great visions to become reality without funding? The answer is none – without resources none of these agendas is worth the paper on which they are written. In this regard, the global Financing for Development Conference which took place in July in Addis was an important step forward in world's commitment to development.

The financing needs to meet sustainable development goals and national aspirations are great. Yet our world has more wealth, more knowledge, and more technologies at its disposal than ever before. The world—and many developing countries—are much wealthier today than they were 15 years ago. Domestic fiscal resources, as well as private capital, can finance development today on a scale that was not possible 15 years ago. While the costs of financing the SDGs have been estimated at \$2-3 trillion, when considered against the \$300 trillion plus global financial system, it is not a large number.

In this regard, let me highlight three particular messages from the Addis Conference:

First, all sources of finance—domestic and international, public and private, stand alone and blended—are needed for the successful implementation of the 2030 agenda. One source of development finance cannot substitute for another. The challenge, however, is to ensure that different sources of finance complement and reinforce each other.

Second, the Official Development Assistance (ODA) remains essential for many developing countries. It is difficult to imagine Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries, Small Island Developing States, and others in special development situations financing their portion of the global sustainable development tab without a lot of help. Some of this help—both in terms of ODA and greater attention to the illicit flows that can drain finance from developing countries—is expected to come from Europe.

The world's understanding of development policy and development aid changed a lot during the last decade. At the 2002 Monterey Finance for Development conference, developed countries promised to increase ODA in order to finance the MDGs. And while subsequent increases were not all that was hoped for, ODA did grow. The European Union, in particular, remained the world's largest aid donor with about 58 billion Euro in development aid provided in 2014 only. Such aid mobilization and targeting contributed immensely to the success of Millennium Development Goals.

By contrast, the Financing for Development conference in Addis Ababa in July did not “put fresh money on the table”. This may reflect the fact that, in contrast to the previous decade, ODA is no longer increasing. It does, however, remain critically important not only for countries in special development situations, but also in its catalytic role vis-à-vis national capacity building for domestic resource mobilization.

And the third message to highlight is that governments need to make sure that all national resources are aiming at development needs of their countries. In this regard, ODA can be instrumental through promoting domestic resource mobilization, building capacities for inclusive growth and development within governments at all levels and in public institutions, as well as strengthening legal and regulatory frameworks.

Europe has long been committed to sustainable development. The EU’s 2006-2010 Sustainable Development Strategy, the EU’s “Europe 2020” Strategy and related European development frameworks, all highlight the logic of “sustainable” and “inclusive growth” that call for

“more resource-efficient”, “greener”, “high-employment” economies able to “deliver social and territorial cohesion”.

Common values and commitment to sustainable development is a key element of the solid platform for the partnership between the UN and the EU. UNDP specifically already works in close collaboration with the EU on a number of mutual priorities globally and particularly in the region of Europe and the CIS. Our partnership has focused on a number of key issues that are central to the EU – as reflected, for example, in the Acquis Communautaire and the Neighbourhood Policy – and to UNDP, through the centrality of our human development approach. With the adoption of the SDGs, our base for partnership is yet further strengthened.

Particularly in our region, the UN – and UNDP specifically – has an important role in mobilizing partners around SDGs implementation and supporting governments in taking this agenda forward. As UNDP, we will continue supporting national and thematic consultations, and will substantively engage with governments and other partners in policy work through three focus areas:



- Sustainable development pathways, especially for the most vulnerable and excluded population groups;
- Inclusive and effective democratic governance; and
- Building resilience.

In today's world, building resilience becomes especially important. Development can only be sustainable in peace and stability. At present, however, these are in short supply—particularly in the Middle East, Afghanistan, Ukraine, and parts of Africa. More people are on the move today than at any time since the United Nations was founded in 1945. Much of this movement is happening in wider Europe. The conflict in Syria has produced more than four million refugees and nearly 8 million internally displaced people.

Understandably, the international community is currently focusing a lot on humanitarian relief, the funding for which has tripled in the last decade. The immediate needs of people fleeing from conflict must be addressed. At the same time, without longer-term development approaches, humanitarian relief will remain a short-term solution. Conflict-induced emergencies and massive refugee movements are

overpowering the international community's capacity to respond. They need longer-term development support, especially in terms of the sources of conflict and the problems it breeds. Through development aid, we need to ensure that societies are inclusive and peaceful, that states and people are resilient to challenges they face, that all have access to justice, and that state institutions at all levels are accountable, inclusive, and effective. Much of this is the focus of the wider UN and UNDP in particular.

This leads me to the final part of my statement. The centrality of the UN development system in driving the 2030 Agenda forward was recognized by Member States which want to see “an adequately resourced, relevant, coherent, efficient and effective United Nations system in supporting the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals and sustainable development”. It is now our responsibility to act on this mandate, including through further engagement with governments and partners on integration of SDGs in national strategies and their implementation, through mobilizing partners around Sustainable Development Goals, and, in partnership with you, through building

national capacities to make policy choices that are pro-people, pro-planet and foster prosperity.

Let me conclude by quoting Pope Francis, who visited the UN during the Summit in September – he said: “The future demands of us critical and global decisions. We cannot permit ourselves to postpone ‘certain agendas’ for the future”. The world made a decision on an ambitious and complex sustainable development agenda. It does require, however, the same level of ambition from its financing platform. Development aid in the post-2015 era will go much beyond its traditional notion. No single actor in the world – no matter how rich it is – will be able to bring the SDGs to their successful conclusion in 2030. All financial resources, including Official Development Aid, will need to be mobilized and strategically directed towards sustainable development for all.

In this complex endeavour, my organization – UNDP – stands ready to continue its strategic and critical partnerships with institutions like the EU and its Member States. And I am sure that SDGs will help in further strengthening this collaboration.

Thank you very much.

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